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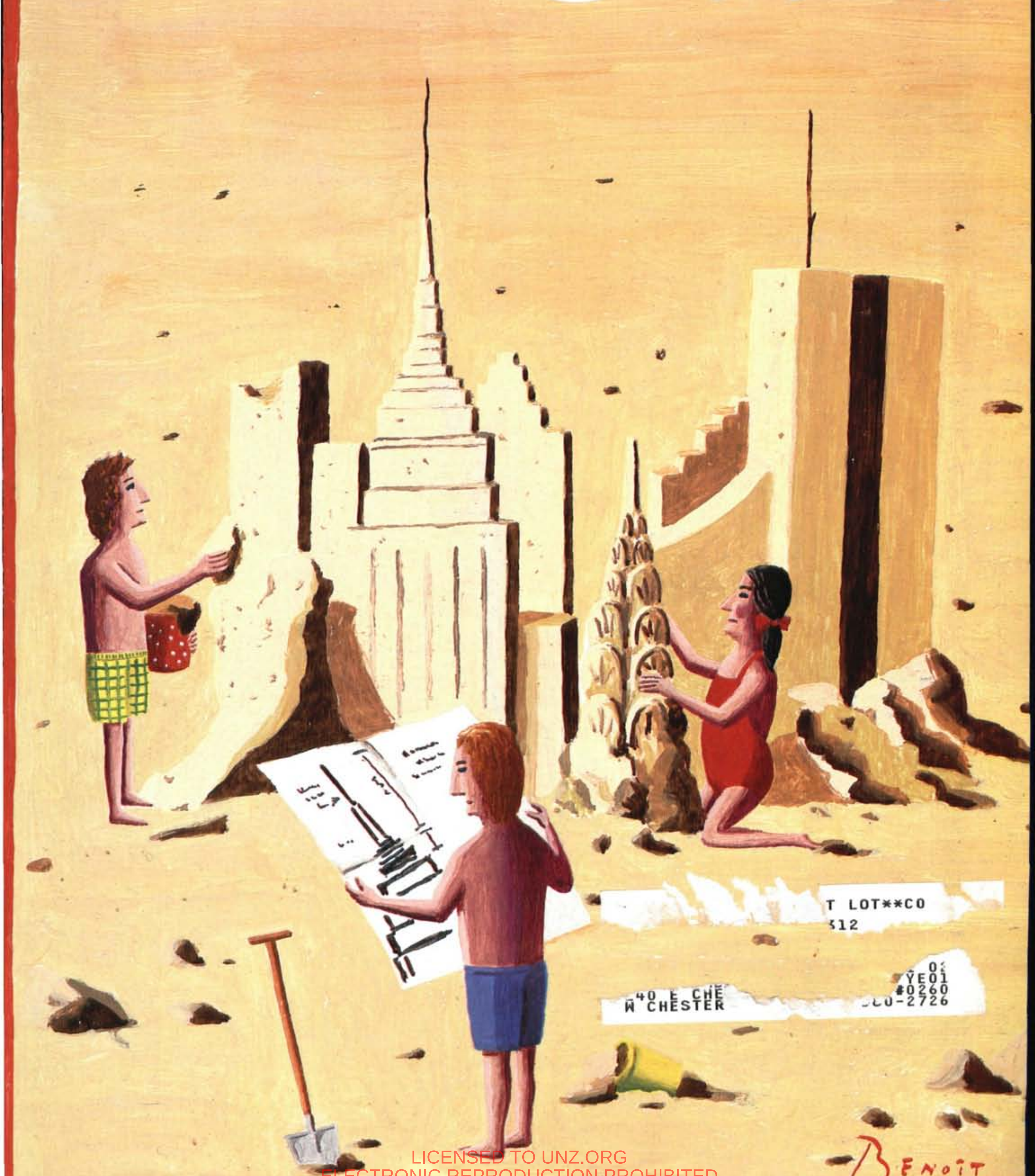
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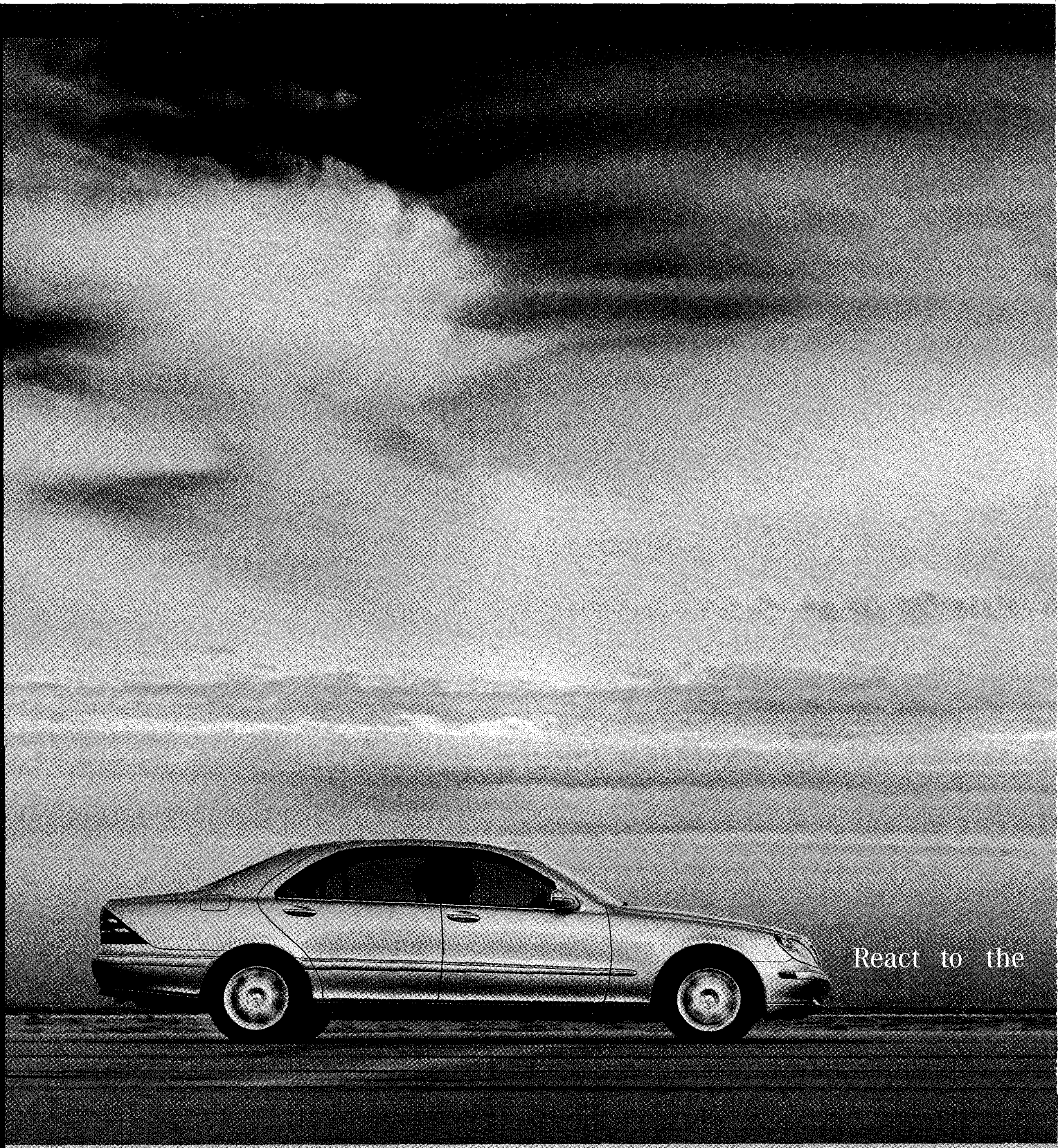

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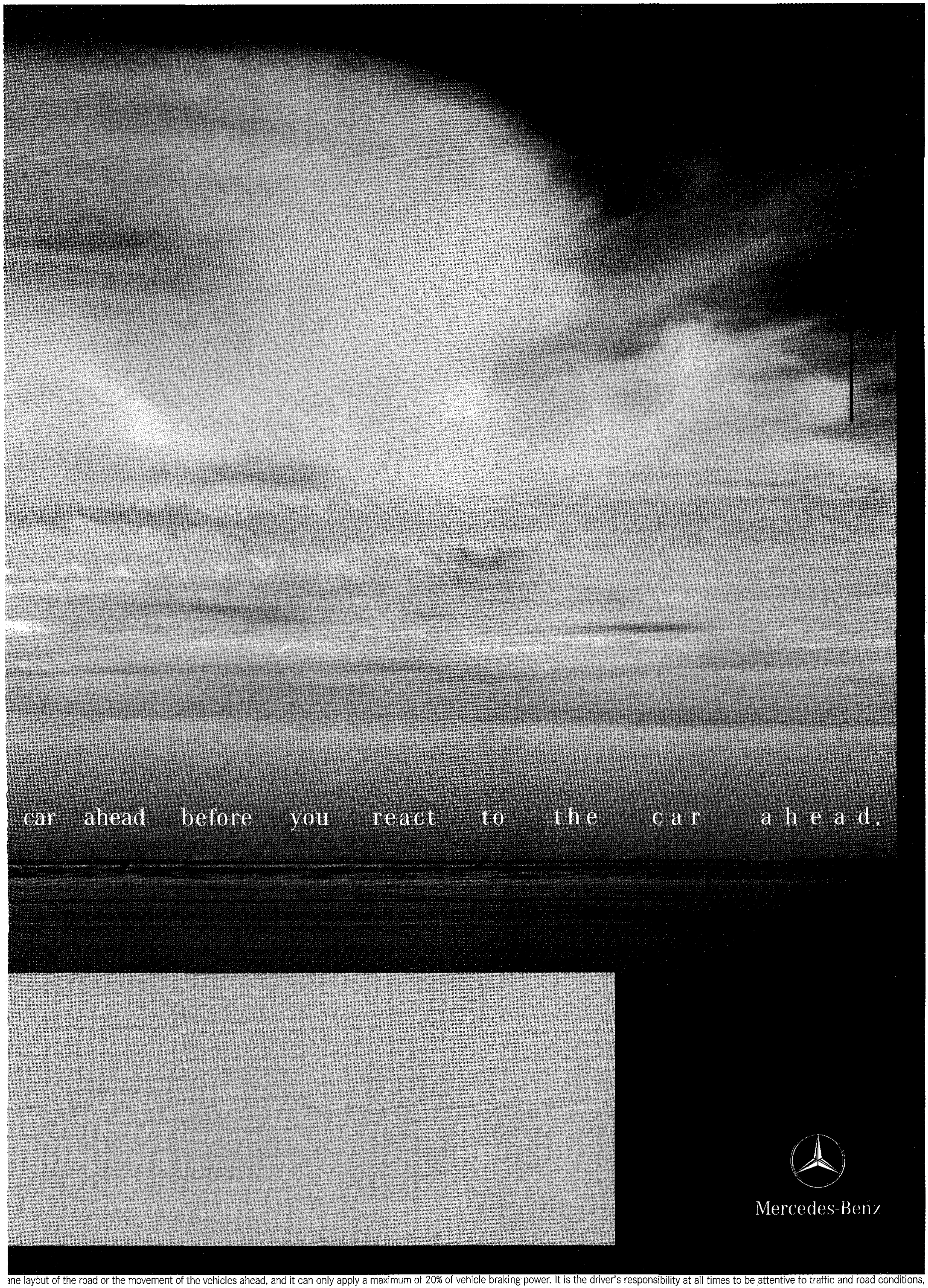
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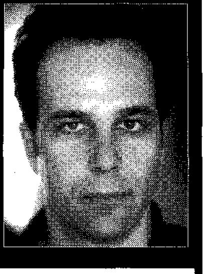

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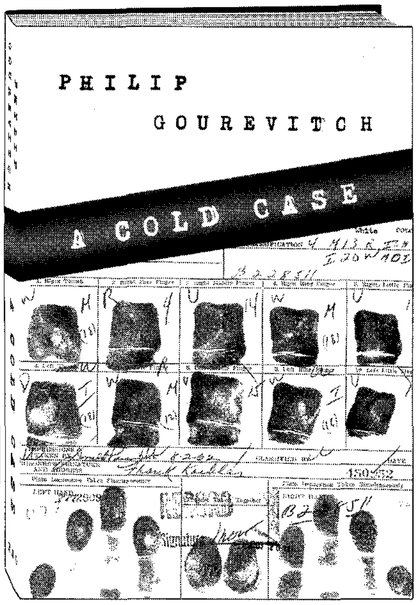

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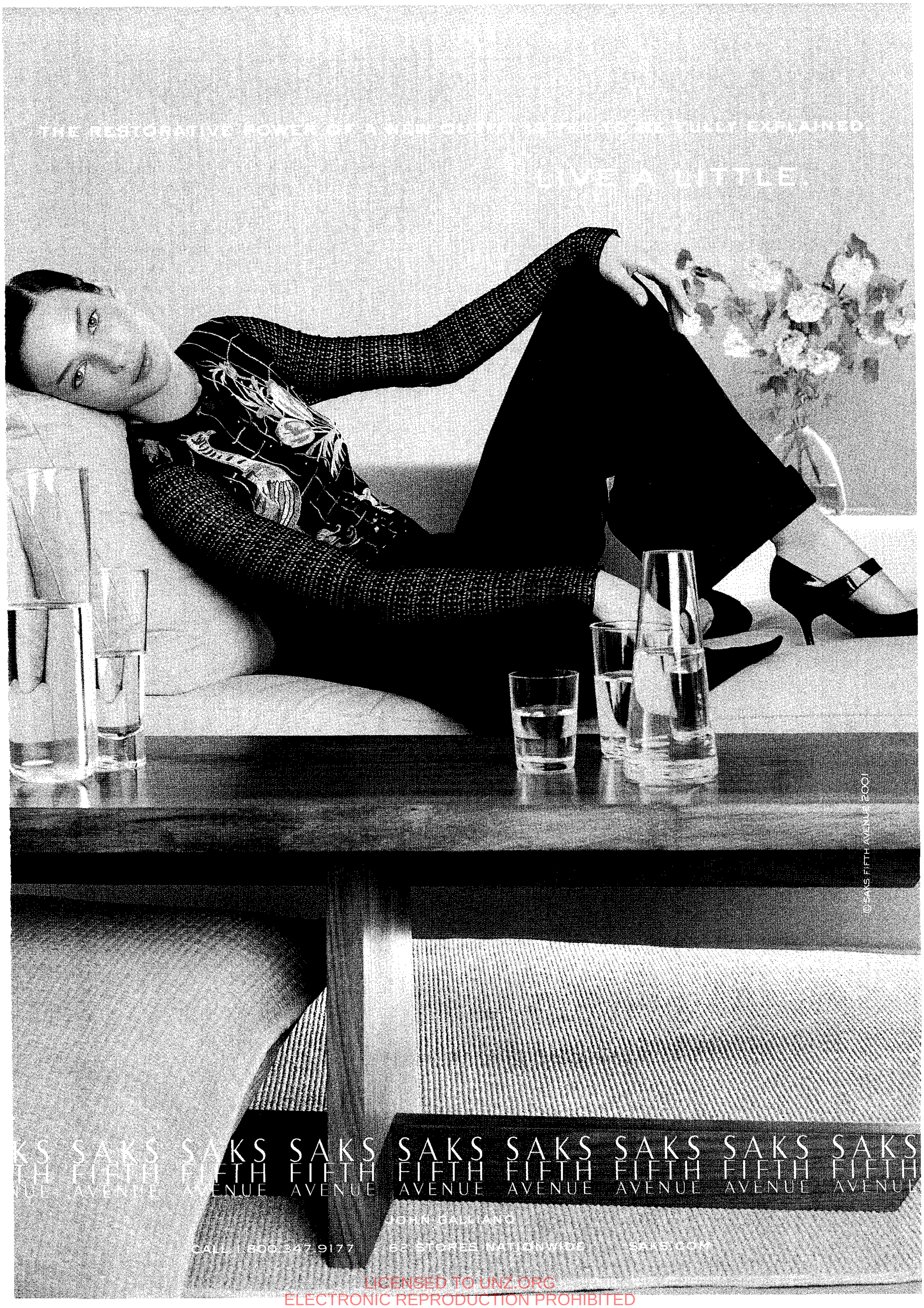
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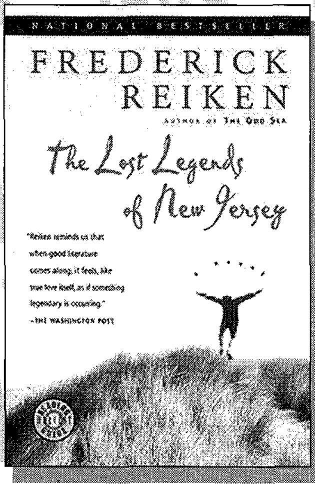
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CONTRIBUTORS

Bernhard Schlink (Fiction, p. 64) is the author of "The Reader" and of several prize-winning crime novels. His collection of stories, "Flights of Love," will be published in October.

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Nancy Franklin (The Theatre, p. 86) writes a regular column on television and is also a theatre critic for the magazine.

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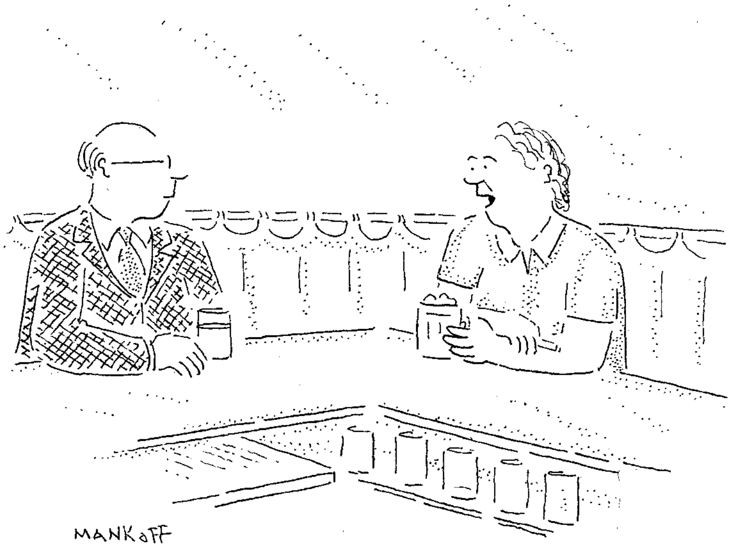
Steve Brodner (Illustration, p. 79) received the James Aronson Award for Social Justice Journalism for 2000, for his satirical illustrations and art journalism. ♦



"Look, I've got nothing against globalization, just as long as it's not in my back yard."

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THE MAIL

A TASTE OF DDT

I am the son of Victor Froelicher, the chemist mentioned in Malcolm Gladwell's article on the use of DDT in the campaign to eradicate malaria in the middle of the last century ("The Mosquito Killer," July 2nd). In addition to helping to develop DDT for the J. R. Geigy company, my father worked to sell the United States government, especially the military, on the pesticide. He once ate a walnut-size piece of DDT in front of Department of Agriculture officials and the Surgeon General of the Army and was told, "Dr. Froelicher, if you are alive tomorrow, Geigy will be getting a big order from us." He got the order (and lived to be eighty-four). He would often apply DDT to the sleeved arms of willing soldiers and prisoners, and our own household was doused with liberal amounts of DDT—every sighting of an insect brought forth the dusting gun. I remember taking on all dares from my playmates to eat the stuff myself. I still remember the taste and smell.

My own career has brought me back in contact with the pesticide of my childhood. I'm paid by the U.S. Army to remove DDT and other pollutants from defense sites. Why spend my working hours and the government's money this way, if I do not believe that DDT is harmful? The public wants it done, the E.P.A. requires it, and, besides, it's a living.

Franz Froelicher
Chemist, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Savannah, Ga.

SOLDIERS IN THE VINEYARDS

Julian Barnes's review of a recent book on the fate of the wine industry in France during the German Occupation captured the ambiguities of collaboration and resistance, but it failed to mention another wartime threat to the vineyards—friendly fire (Books, July 16th). In the summer of 1944, the Free French became concerned about the damage that the Americans who had landed with them in Provence might do to winemaking regions. Rather than let the Americans shell German forces retreating through the Rhône Valley and Burgundy—the standard U.S. tactic to avoid Allied casualties—the French offered to forgo the support of heavy firepower, risking casualties of their own. The French prevailed, the vineyards were spared, and a Franco-American crisis was averted. And, in the event, once routed from the Mediterranean naval base at Toulon, the Germans put up little resistance until the Allies reached Alsace.

Jonathan Randal
Paris, France

RICH ITALIANS

James Surowiecki's column on misapprehensions about the size of the Chinese market proves that more than one stereotype dies hard (The Talk of the Town, July 16th). Surowiecki argues that, forty years from now, China will, at best, be "a middle-developed country"; to provide the reader with a yardstick, he adds, parenthetically, "Think Italy." This is, presumably, the same Italy that is a member of the G-8, the group of the major industrialized nations, and one of the world's wealthiest countries. (Italy hosted last month's G-8 meeting, as anyone who saw footage of the Genoa protests will remember.) Italy's estimated per-capita G.D.P. in 1999 was $21,400, just four hundred dollars below that of the United Kingdom—another middle-developed country?—while China's estimated per-capita G.D.P. was only $3,800. Surowiecki has fallen for the travel-poster image of Italy as the land of good food, motor scooters, and poor economic performance. Not everyone in the country, however, is a gondolier.

Angelo Somaschini
Nesconset, N.Y.

•

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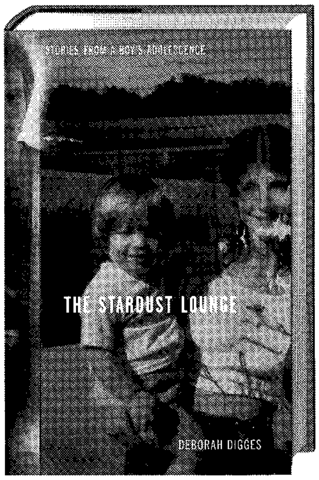
—ALEX KOTLOWITZ, author of *There Are No Children Here*



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—*USA Today*

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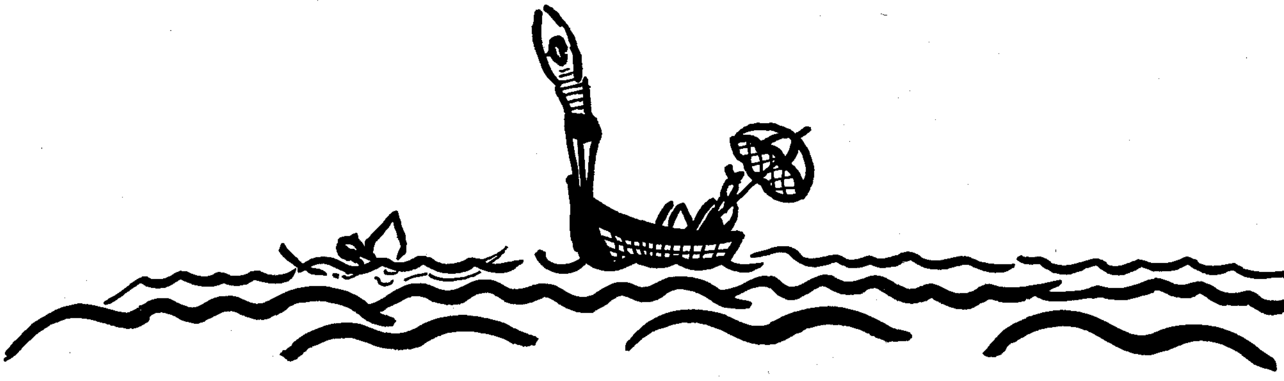
GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN



THE THEATRE
OPENINGS & PREVIEWS

Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.

BAT THEATRE COMPANY
Presenting five plays in repertory. Aug. 1, Aug. 3, and Aug. 5 at 7: Lillian Mortimer's "No Mother to Guide Her." ♦ Aug. 2 at 7, Aug. 4 at 3 and 7, and Aug. 5 at 3: Walter Woods's "Billy the Kid." ♦ Aug. 2 at 10, Aug. 3-4 at midnight, and Aug. 6 at 9: "Ajax," by Alice Tuan. ♦ Aug. 4-5 at 1: "Cleveland," by Mac Wellman. ♦ Aug. 3 at 10 and Aug. 6 at 7: "Sincerity Forever," by Mr. Wellman. (Flea Theatre, 41 White St., between Broadway and Church St. 226-2407.)

HELLO MUDDAH, HELLO FADDUH!
A musical by Doug Bernstein and Rob Krausz, inspired by the Allan Sherman song of the same name, which follows the relationship of a couple from their childhood days at Camp Grenada to marriage in suburbia to retirement in Florida. Preview on Aug. 1. Opens Aug. 2 at 7. (Triad, 158 W. 72nd St. 239-6200.)

IF YOU EVER LEAVE ME, I'M GOING WITH YOU!
From the husband-and-wife acting and comedy-writing team Renee Taylor and Joseph Bologna, a play about their thirty-six-year relationship—which has included a wedding reception on "The Merv Griffin Show" and the renewal of their marriage vows five times. In previews through Aug. 5. Opens Aug. 6 at 6:45. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

MR. PRESIDENT
Gerard Allesandrini has updated Irving Berlin's 1962 musical to reflect the current political scene. The show will run in repertory with Allesandrini's "Forbidden Broadway 2001: A Spoof Odyssey." Opens Aug. 2 at 8:15. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

THE MOON IN VAIN
Rae C. Wright portrays the actress Irina Arkadina in the first installment of a triptych inspired by Chekhov's "The Seagull," set a year after the original play's end. Written by Ms. Wright and Lee Gundersheimer. In previews Aug. 1-2. Opens Aug. 7 at 8 and continues, Tuesdays through Thursdays, through Aug. 30. (Dixon Place, 309 E. 26th St. 532-1546.)

THE SEAGULL
Mike Nichols directs John Goodman, Marcia Gay Harden, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Kevin Kline, Debra Monk, Larry Pine, Natalie Portman, Stephen Spinella, Meryl Streep, and Christopher Walken in Chekhov's play, the second production in the New York Shakespeare Festival's outdoor season. In previews. (Delacorte Theatre, Central Park, near W. 81st St. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 539-8750.)

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OPENED RECENTLY

THE AMERICAN LIVING ROOM DIRECTING CABARET
The annual summer series presents two-night-only stagings of short works directed by emerging artists. July 31 and Aug. 1 at 8:30: "Drive!," directed by Sherri Kronfield; "Muerte en la Mente" ("Death on My Mind"), written by Raul H. Castillo and directed by Keira Fromm; and "Roadicide: The Album," adapted and directed by Michael Alltop. ♦ Aug. 2-3 at 8:30: "Between Here and There: What a Walk Lasts," written by Victoria Szpungberg and directed by Marissa Bejar, and Sartre's "The Respectful Prostitute," directed by Lisa Milinazzo. ♦ Aug. 4-5 at 8:30: "The Other Side," written and directed by Angel David; "Atheist," written by Tim Sawicki and directed by Erin Lucas; and "Mr. Marshall's Myth," written by Kirsten Finberg and directed by Aaron C. Smith. The festival continues through Sept. 2. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., at Spring St. 647-0202.)

BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL
A kind of "My Fair Bat Boy," in which a half-bat, half-man—memorably played by Deven May—emerges from his childhood cave into adult bourgeois life. But the musical world he enters is one of darkness, not light, of ironies, not idealism, where plot is a history of abdications and song extolls the emptiness of all the standard credos—Christianity, family, community, love, redemption—and of the musical form itself. It's a jejune vision, but a smart, playful, and funny one nonetheless. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/9/01.) (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-4100.)

BLAST!
A musical extravaganza, which evolved from the drum-and-bugle corps Star of Indiana. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.)

BLUE
In Charles Randolph-Wright's memory play, a trumpet player named Reuben Clark (Hill Harper) returns to his childhood in a small South Carolina town, where his family owns the only African-American funeral parlor. His beautiful, narcissistic, upwardly mobile mother, Peggy (Phylicia Rashad), rules the roost with a cunning withholding of affection and an ongoing fantasy of elegance and achievement. Young Reuben (Chad Tucker) is idealized as "my own little Miles Davis" and Peggy is visited by the spectre of Blue Williams (the superb Michael McElroy), a jazz singer, who at first appears, and croons in a cool romantic vibrato, only to her. Unfortunately, Reuben's entire transition to manhood—his leaving home, his rejection of the trumpet, his therapy, and his final coming to terms with his mother—takes place offstage. What we are left with is a patina of literacy and boulevard lyricism but no internal life. It's basically a sitcom with song—as if Neil Simon and Lorraine Hansberry had married and produced "The Jeffersons" with a better vocabulary. (7/9/01) (Gramercy Theatre, 127 E. 23rd St. 307-4100.)

CHICAGO CITY LIMITS
The improv company in its latest revue, "Now and Forever . . . and We Mean It." (Chicago City Limits Theatre, 1105 First Ave., at 61st St. 888-5233.)

DOWN SOUTH
In a comedy by Doug Field, the Rattlestick Theatre takes aim at the Cuban-missile crisis. (224 Waverly Pl., at 11th St. 239-6200. Closes Sept. 9.)

42ND STREET
As a domineering diva who breaks her ankle before the big opening night, the wonderful Christine Ebersole steals the show in this revival of the 1980 tap musical based on the 1933 film. But it has to be said: it was probably easy to do. As the young chorine who steps in to save the day, Kate Levering doesn't have enough star power to shine above the legions of hoofers who crowd the stage, and Michael Cumpsty, as the gruff director, is sorely miscast. Still, if this sort of show is your cup of tea, the songs are wonderful and the dancing is fine—just know that the cup is not quite full. (Ford Center, 213 W. 42nd St. 307-4100.)

FOUR
Knowing that this play by the twenty-five-year-old Christopher Shinn was originally produced in London makes the setting exotic. It's the Fourth of July, 1996, in Hartford, Connecticut, and two couples are getting together—a white gay teenager with an older, married black man he met on the Internet, and the man's daughter with a white kid who plays basketball. The characters are sharp, but mostly too young (the married man notwithstanding) for their problems to be consistently interesting; their relationships are involving without being satisfying, both for them and for the audience. The actors, however, under the direction of Jeff Cohen, are excellent. (Tribeca Playhouse, 111 Reade St. 206-1515.)

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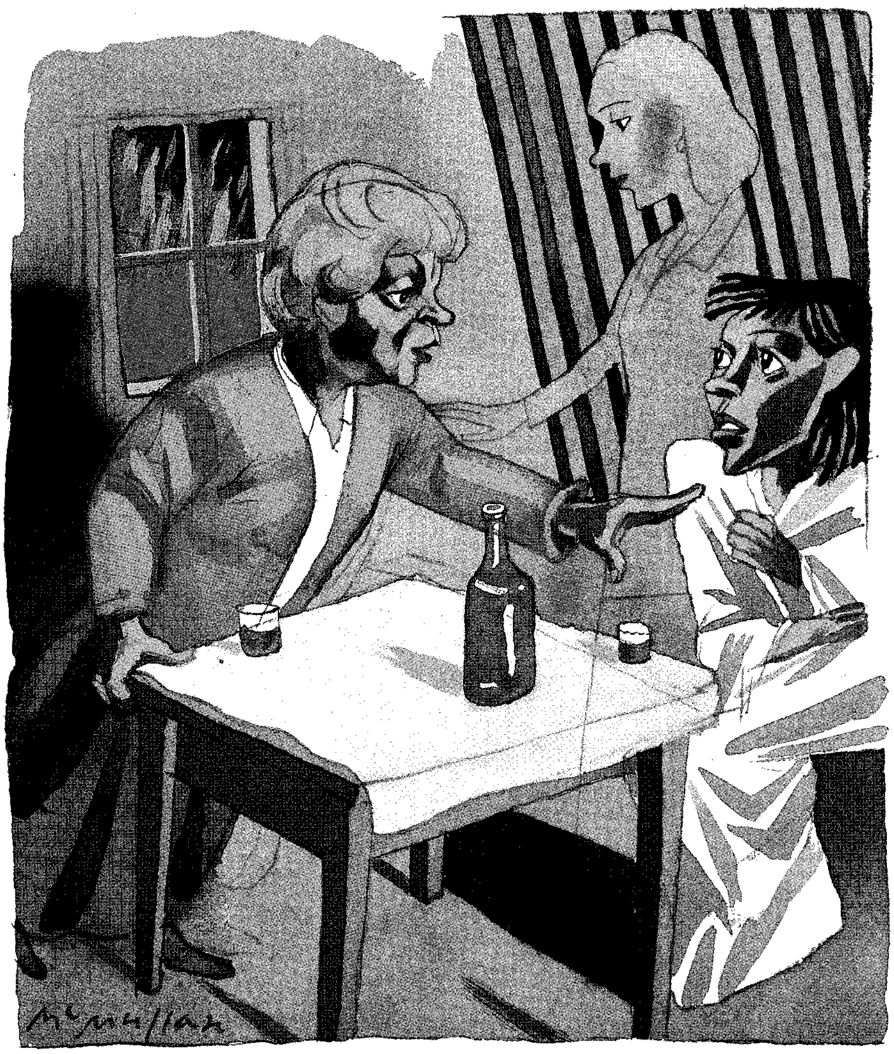


Ruby Dee and Toks Olagundoye, in "Saint Lucy's Eyes," by Bridgette A. Wimberly.

GEORGE GERSHWIN ALONE
A one-man portrait with music, written and performed by Hershey Felder and directed by Joel Zwick. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Closes Sept. 9.)

HUDSON VALLEY SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL
Outdoor repertory performances of "The Merchant of Venice" (through Aug. 5) and "Romeo and Juliet" (through Sept. 2), both directed by Terrence O'Brien. (Boscobel Restoration, Garrison, N.Y. For ticket information and directions, call 845-265-9575.)

I SING!
A musical comedy about postgraduate life in New York City, by Eli Bolin, Sam Forman, and Benjamin Salka. (Maverick, 307 W. 26th St. 239-6200.)

A LIFE
Fritz Weaver portrays an Irish civil servant nearing the end of his life, in Hugh Leonard's 1981 play. (Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. 727-2737. Closes Aug. 12.)

LOBBY HERO
In another era, the contrivances of Kenneth Lonergan's new play would have been called hokum. But because Lonergan is the writer and director of the moving and successful film "You Can Count on Me" and the author of the acclaimed plays "This Is Our Youth" and "The Waverly Gallery" the public is expecting him to aim high. He does, and misses. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

LOVE, JANIS
A musical play about Janis Joplin, built around her songs, writings, and interviews. Though it contains no new insight, it's a useful corrective to the drunken, drug-addicted legend, and the production is a fine one. Randal Myler directed with a sure eye for the telling detail, and the seven-member band really cooks. (Village Theatre, 158 Bleecker St. 307-4100.)

MAJOR BARBARA
Cherry Jones has the title role in a Roundabout Theatre Company production of Shaw's play. Daniel Sullivan is the director. (7/30/01) (American Airlines Theatre, 227 W. 42nd St. 719-1300.)

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING
The Aquila Theatre Company's version of Shakespeare's comedy, set in London in the sixties. (45 Bleecker Street Theatre, at 45 Bleecker St. 529-4530.)

MUSIC FROM A SPARKLING PLANET
A new comedy by Douglas Carter Beane ("As Bees in Honey Drown"). (7/30/01) (Greenwich House, 27 Barrow St. 239-6200.)

ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST
Dale Wasserman's severely dated adaptation of Ken Kesey's 1962 novel—a broad allegory, set in a mental hospital, about the perils of nonconformity—is a quaint relic, but as staged by Chicago's excellent Steppenwolf Theatre it's a well-acted one. Gary Sinise leads the cast, as the incorrigible psychiatric patient Randle P. McMurphy. Terry Kinney is the director. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THE PLAY ABOUT THE BABY
In Edward Albee's new play, an older couple provide a harsh taste of what life has in store for a young couple with a new baby. Brian Murray and Marian Seldes, two veterans who are rarely less than riveting, make the most of Albee's sharp, enigmatic writing; their highly stylized, virtuosic performances here are stunning. David Esbjornson directed. (2/19 & 26/01) (Century Center, 111 E. 15th St. 239-6200. Closes Sept. 1.)

THE PRODUCERS
High-camp heaven from Mel Brooks, who wrote the music and the lyrics for this monster-hit version of his 1968 movie—in which two scoundrels try to bilk their investors by staging a surefire failure, entitled "Springtime for Hitler." The performing centerpiece of the show is Nathan Lane, as the flamboyant huckster Max Bialystock; his kind of high-amperage panache is in limited supply these days, and both he and the excellent Matthew Broderick, as the hapless accountant Leo Bloom, deliver the mail. Expertly staged by Susan Stroman. (5/7/01) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

SAINT LUCY'S EYES
Ruby Dee portrays a back-room abortionist in civil-rights-era Memphis, in an encore staging of Bridgette A. Wimberly's drama. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 239-6200.)

SHUT UP AND LOVE ME
A limited-run encore engagement of the performance artist Karen Finley's latest examination of sexuality. In previews. (Westbeth Theatre Center, 151 Bank St. 741-0391.)

SIX GOUMBAS AND A WANNABE
A group of friends from the same Brooklyn neighborhood stage a reunion after fifteen years apart, in a comedy by Vincent Gogliormella. (Players, 115 MacDougal St. 239-6200.)

SLANGUAGE
Poetry, jazz, hip-hop, politics, the blues, and boleros are all a part of the latest work by the Bronx troupe known as Universes. Jo Bonney is the director. (New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 239-6200.)

STONES IN HIS POCKETS
Marie Jones's play is set in an Irish village where a big-budget Hollywood movie is being made. Conleth Hill and Seán Campion play two extras in the movie and all thirteen other characters as well. Though the play has its clever ways when it comes to sending up both Hollywood and Irish mores, the stories told here aren't anything you haven't seen before. (4/16/01) (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

A THOUSAND CLOWNS
Tom Selleck is the eccentric Murray Burns, in a revival of Herb Gardner's 1962 comedy. John Rando is the director. (Longacre, 220 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

TICK, TICK . . . BOOM!
The title represents the author Jonathan Larson's fear of time running out on his musical dreams, but it also plays as a spooky reminder that time did run out on him. (He died, at thirty-five, of an aortic aneurysm, just after the dress rehearsal of "Rent," his sprawling musical.) It's set on the eve of the composer's thirtieth birthday—his Walpurgisnacht—as he is caught between the pressures to succeed and to settle. Larson's ambition was to marry rock and roll to an up-to-the-minute Broadway-musical form, and this show, which has an orchestra of four and a slick, hardworking cast of three, shows him trying to adjust his goals to economic reality. Well directed by Scott Schwartz, and with Larson's plotline deftly reworked by David Auburn, it has a fetching modesty, and shows off Larson's idiosyncrasy, energy, and promise. What remains unresolved is whether he could have built on his lyric gifts to tell a proper story. Still, as a miniature testament to Larson's fervent heart, "Tick, Tick . . . Boom" has sinew and a winning sweetness. (7/9/01) (Jane Street Theatre, 113 Jane St. 239-6200.)

TOPDOG/UNDERDOG
Don Cheadle and Jeffrey Wright portray a pair of rivalrous brothers, Lincoln and Booth, in Suzan-Lori Parks's new comedy. George C. Wolfe is the director. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400.)

LONG RUNS

AIDA
Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4747.

ANNIE GET YOUR GUN
Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST
Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4747.

BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES
Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370.

JAMES MC MULLAN

CABARET
Studio 54, at 254 W. 54th St. 239-6200.
CHICAGO
Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.
CONTACT
Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.
DE LA GUARDA
Daryl Roth, 20 Union Sq. E., at 15th St. 239-6200.
THE DINNER PARTY
Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.
THE FANTASTICKS
Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.
FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 2001: A SPOOF ODYSSEY
Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.
FOSSE
Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.
THE FULL MONTY
Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200.
KISS ME, KATE
Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.
THE LION KING
New Amsterdam, 214 W. 42nd St. 307-4100.
LES MISÉRABLES
Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.
THE MUSIC MAN
Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100.
PERFECT CRIME
Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401.
THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.
PROOF
Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.
RENT
Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000.
THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW
Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.
STOMP
Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.
THE SYRINGA TREE
Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 307-4100.
THE TALE OF THE ALLERGIST'S WIFE
Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.
TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING
St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 239-6200.
THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES
Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200.

DANCE

DANCE GALAXY
The company founded by former New York City Ballet principal Judith Fugate and her husband, Mehdi Bahiri, performs premières by Peter Martins and Stanton Welch and repertory work by Adam Miller and Choo San Goh. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. July 30 at 7, July 31-Aug. 3 at 8, and Aug. 4 at 2 and 8.)

UNIVERSAL BALLET OF KOREA
The eighty-six-member troupe, trained in Kirov-style classicism and long supported by Reverend Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church, has been paying its own way of late and garnering praise for its soft lyricism and uniformity of style. A full-length "La Bayadère" alternates performances with "Shim Chung," based on a Korean folktale. (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Aug. 1-4 at 8 and Aug. 5 at 2.)

CENTRAL PARK SUMMERSTAGE
The Brazilian choreographers Andrea Lerner and Rosane Chamecki present an excerpt from their full-length work "Poor Reality." The Korean-born choreographer Eun Me Ahn completes the program with "Apple and Garden of Roses," a solo about the aging dancer. (Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. No tickets necessary. Aug. 3 at 8:30.)

"RIVERDANCE—ON BROADWAY"
Not the Lord of the Dance with his shirt off and the leather truss. The other one. (Gershwin Theatre, 222 W. 51st St. 307-4100. Aug. 1 and Aug. 4 at 2 and 8, Aug. 2-3 and Aug. 7 at 8, and Aug. 5 at 3. Through Aug. 26.)

OUT OF TOWN

JACOB'S PILLOW DANCE FESTIVAL
July 31-Aug. 3 at 8, Aug. 4 at 2 and 8, and Aug. 5 at 2: Noche Flamenca. ♦ Aug. 2-3 at 8:15, Aug. 4 at 2:15 and 8:15, and Aug. 5 at 5: "Urban Tap." (Becket, Mass. For information about tickets, call 413-243-0745.)

NIGHT LIFE
CONCERTS

LUNA
These longtime favorites of the Lower East Side music scene have built a substantial following based on their endearing, lo-fi music, which is full of nods to their downtown Manhattan forefathers, the Velvet Underground and Television. (World Trade Center Plaza. Aug. 1 at 6. No tickets necessary.)

JOHN SCOFIELD
The jazz-guitar hero Scofield can't be accused of being late to jump on the funk bandwagon. He's been indulging his love of R. & B., on and off, since his career began more than twenty-five years ago. Now that jazz-funk is suddenly the rage with a whole new generation of players, Scofield gets to wear his crown with pride. (Castle Clinton, Battery Park. Aug. 2 at 7. Free tickets, which are required, will be distributed at 5.)

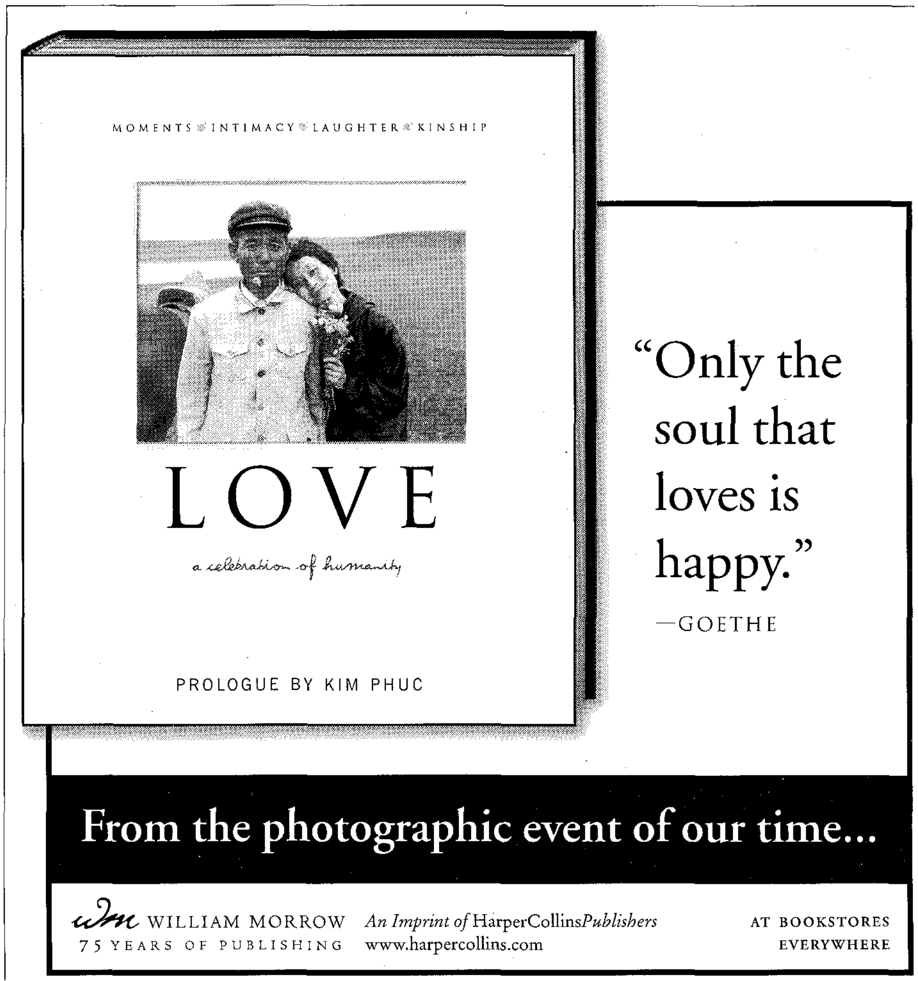
GILLIAN WELCH AND DAVID RAWLINGS
Down-to-earth bluegrass and country from an unexpected source. The Los Angeles native Welch, who sings with a rich terrestrial twang, met the guitarist Rawlings while enrolled in the Berklee School of Music, in Boston. With **Greg Brown** and his solid, good-ol'-boy voice. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Aug. 2 at 8.)

CELEBRATE BROOKLYN!
The alfresco concerts in Prospect Park continue. Aug. 3 at 7:30: A night of reggae with **Culture** and **Judah Eskender Tafari.** ♦ Aug. 7 at 7:30: **Emmylou Harris,** the grande dame of progressive country, offers a benefit concert. (Prospect Park Bandshell, Prospect Park W. at 9th St. 718-855-7882, ext. 45.)

TREY ANASTASIO
With his band on hiatus, the Phish guitarist and vocalist indulges himself down by the sea. (Jones Beach Theatre. 516-221-1000. Aug. 3 at 7:30.)

VANS WARPED TOUR
Once upon a time, the notion of a corporate-sponsored punk tour was a laughable oxymoron; an impossible alliance of youthful chaos with profit-minded opportunism. These days, however, with punk neutered, what was previously unthinkable is an institution. This year, the spiky neophytes **Rancid,** the burly, tattooed old-schoolers the **Rollins Band,** the ribald rappers **D12,** and many, many other acts turn rebellion into money for a hip sneaker company, and for themselves. (Randall's Island. 307-7171. Aug. 4 at noon.)

CENTRAL PARK SUMMERSTAGE
Music under the trees in Manhattan's communal back yard. Aug. 4 at 3: An afternoon of bluegrass with **Ricky Skaggs** and **John Herald.** Aug. 5 at 3: **Living Colour,** the seminal all-black rock band, reunites for a bit of Bush the Elder-era nostalgia. Aug. 6 at 7: Four years ago, **Erykah Badu** distinguished herself from the hordes of computer-driven R. & B. divas with a percolating, low-key hit single, "On & On," and a fantastic album, "Baduizm," which was full of her distinctive brand of wacky New Age spirituality tinged with sex-kitten languor. On her latest disk, "Mama's Gun," Badu flirts with edgy rock guitar. Onstage she's a stunning presence with full command of



MOMENTS ◈ INTIMACY ◈ LAUGHTER ◈ KINSHIP
LOVE
a celebration of humanity
PROLOGUE BY KIM PHUC

"Only the soul that loves is happy."
—GOETHE

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both the audience and her many talents. A benefit concert. (Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. 360-2777.)

LEROY THOMAS AND THE ZYDECO ROADRUNNERS
Thomas started out in his father's zydeco band when he was just a teen-ager, and along the way he's honed his skill on the single-note accordion as well as on the larger, piano-note accordion. The bandleader also has a strong sense of humor, and when he breaks into the title track on his CD, "Monkey & the Baboon," ("Well the monkey and the baboon playing in the grass / Monkey told the baboon you kiss too fast / Baboon say no this cannot be / And the monkey say, baby, you're killing me"), even the most stressed-out New Yorkers will be in the mood to party. (La Belle Époque, 827 Broadway, between 12th and 13th Sts. For information about dance lessons, which are offered before showtime, call 685-7597. Aug. 5 at 7:30.)

RADIOHEAD
Blazing new frontiers at the height of their powers, this celebrated British alternative band's steadily developing "difficult listening" direction hasn't put off too many fans yet, despite its members' newfound disdain for conventional rock. With the sometimes goofy but always endearing eclecticism of the U.K.'s **Beta Band** and **Kid Koala**, a Canadian turntablist who is something of a mastermind. (Madison Square Garden. 307-7171. Aug. 7 at 7:30.)

CLUBS

Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.

BOTTOM LINE
15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Aug. 2-3: The **Flatlanders** brought together three friends from West Texas—Joe Ely, Jimmie Dale Gilmore, and Butch Hancock—for a brief moment in the early seventies. The band's legend has grown over the years, and its members have established individual reputations as singers and songwriters. After reuniting briefly three years ago to contribute to the soundtrack for the film "The Horse Whisperer," the boys are back together on the road, recapturing the promise of their youth. Aug. 7: The **Original Harmony Ridge Creek Dippers** are led by the ex-Jayhawk Mark Olson and the singer-songwriter Victoria Williams, a husband-and-wife team who enjoy revelling in quirky homespun back-porch country.

BOWERY BALLROOM
6 Delancey St. (533-2111)—Aug. 1: The **Charlatans UK.** Initially written off as a pale imitation of the then-messianic Stone Roses, the jangly British pop practitioners persevered through the nineties, developing a distinctive sound and an audience of their own. A decade later, they're Brit-pop veterans, and the Stone Roses are just a fading footnote. Aug. 2-3: **Cibo Matto.** The Japanese-American duo of Miho Hatori and Yuka Honda samples everything from French pop to Brooklyn hip-hop and fashions it into a candy-coated mix that giddily swings between kitsch and hipster sophistry.

JOE'S PUB
425 Lafayette St. (539-8777)—Aug. 3-5: The Malian singer **Rokia Traoré** grew up in Europe and the Middle East (her father was a diplomat), so her approach to the music of her homeland, something many people might lump into the category of world music, is very worldly indeed. Her voice is elegant and her bearing is regal, but that doesn't stop her from dancing wildly in performance.

KNITTING FACTORY
74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—Aug. 2: The guitarist **Gary Lucas** performs a rare solo acoustic show. Aug. 3: Lucas presents his take on the Chinese pop music of the thirties, forties, and fifties. Aug 4: Lucas and **Peter Stampfel**, a founding member of the Holy Modal Rounders, team up as the Du-Tels for an evening of psychedelic acoustic folk.

MAKOR
35 W. 67th St. (601-1000)—Aug. 7: **Kelly Joe Phelps**, a onetime jazz guitarist who went on to embrace pure acoustic blues and who now favors more narrative and folky music. He gets a hand on his latest album, "Sky Like a Broken Clock," from Tom Waits's bassist, Larry Taylor, and Morphine drummer Billy Conway.

MARION'S CONTINENTAL RESTAURANT & LOUNGE
354 Bowery, between 3rd and 4th Sts. (475-7621)—Through Labor Day, this East Village nightspot dispenses with its usual décor and becomes the Kahiki Lounge. Inspired by a now defunct sixties-era Columbus, Ohio, Polynesian restaurant, the Kahiki Lounge is outfitted with straw huts, bamboo stalks, and colorful paper lanterns. Order a mai tai and and a pupu platter and take a cheap trip to the South Seas.

MAXWELL'S
1039 Washington St., Hoboken (201-798-0406)—Aug. 1: **Dave Davies' Kink Kronikles.** One half of the revered sibling duo responsible for some of classic rock's most memorable moments, the ex-Kinks guitarist/songwriter Davies revisits some of the music he made when not battling with his lead-singer brother, Ray. Aug. 3: In the mid-seventies the **Dictators** shared the downtown street light with such New York heavyweights as the Ramones and Blondie, but their muscle-bound, beer-fuelled rock had a little too much metal in it (one of the band's bassists, Mark Mendoza, left to join Twisted Sister) to achieve the hipness of their more celebrated peers. Their influence has finally been acknowledged, and now they've achieved local living-legend status. Aug. 4: San Francisco's **Black Rebel Motorcycle Club** takes its name from Marlon Brando's gang in the 1950 movie "The Wild One," but its sound and visual aesthetic owe a healthy debt to the Jesus & Mary Chain's watershed album, "Psychocandy." The B.R.M.C. may be guilty of liberal appropriation and rampant Anglophilia, but that doesn't make its black-clad, druggy rock any less potent.

WETLANDS
161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Aug. 3: While some may credit **Spacehog's** inexplicable endurance (despite not having a hit since their début single, "In the Meantime," back in 1995) to the founding brothers Royston and Anthony Langdon's penchant for celebrity girlfriends (Royston was recently engaged to Liv Tyler), this quartet of glittery British expats is back with a new album, "The Hogyssey," to remind us that glammed-out pop à la David Bowie's "Hunky Dory" never goes out of style.

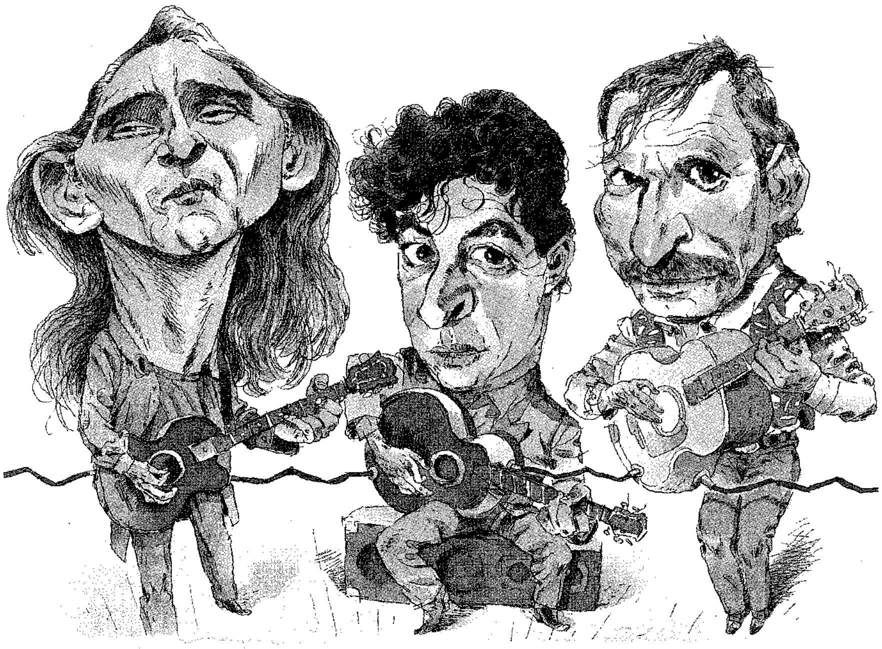
JAZZ AND STANDARDS

ALGONQUIN HOTEL
59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Through Aug. 11: **Daryl Sherman,** a vastly underrated vocalist and pianist, may not have learned every standard worth knowing, but don't bet on stumping her any time soon. This New York treasure will be joined, separately, by three of the most accomplished mainstream guitarists—**Bucky Pizzarelli, Gene Bertoncini,** and **Joe Cohn**—throughout her engagement. Dining.

BIRDLAND
315 W. 44th St. (581-3080)—Aug. 2-4: Good old-fashioned hard bop by any name—here, it emanates from the **New York Powerhouse Ensemble**—always sounds sweet and vicious. A smattering of new-generation players are on hand, including the saxophonist **Craig Handy,** but it's the still crafty veterans who will provide the real thrills: the saxophone master **Gary Bartz** and on successive nights the pianists **George Cables** (Thursday), **Hilton Ruiz** (Friday), and **John Hicks** (Saturday). Aug. 5-6 and Mondays throughout the month: The **Tito Puente Orchestra.** The timbal master and diminutive dynamo is no longer with us, but his crack band carries on. Dining.

BLUE NOTE
131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Through Aug. 5: Celebrating his seventieth birthday, **Kenny Burrell** mixes pleasant vocalizing into his ever-elegant guitar improvisations. / The **New York Voices** remind you of a polished Manhattan Transfer with, thankfully, less shtick.

IRIDIUM
1650 Broadway, at 51st St. (582-2121)—Through Aug. 4: The now-you-see-him-now-you-don't pianist and composer **Andrew Hill** has played the role of the outsider for so long that his recent return to the spotlight must have had a dizzying effect on him. Hill's artistic peak was in the nineteen-sixties, the only decade that could spawn and tolerate the inherent mysteries of his oblique harmonic stance, his seesaw mid-tempo melodies, and his dirgelike ballads. It was private music that never really fit in a marketplace, and Hill continues to compose gripping tunes that mess gleefully with harmony



The West Texas legends the Flatlanders ride into the Bottom Line this week.

JOHN CUNEO

and rhythm while favoring cloudy jazz atmospheres. Mondays belong to the electric-guitar innovator **Les Paul.**

VILLAGE VANGUARD
178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Through Aug. 5: From industrious sideman to bad-boy rebel to youngish elder statesman, it's been a steady and richly rewarding climb for the saxophonist **Greg Osby.** With a whole coterie of talented twentysomething players whom he has nurtured out there, Osby, an edgy stylist who may be the most engaging altoist of his own generation, is well on his way to becoming a new-millennium Art Blakey. One of the most gifted of the upstarts, the pianist **Jason Moran,** will be on hand, but the real ringer in the band is the bassist **Mark Helias,** a downtown-music veteran. The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.

ART

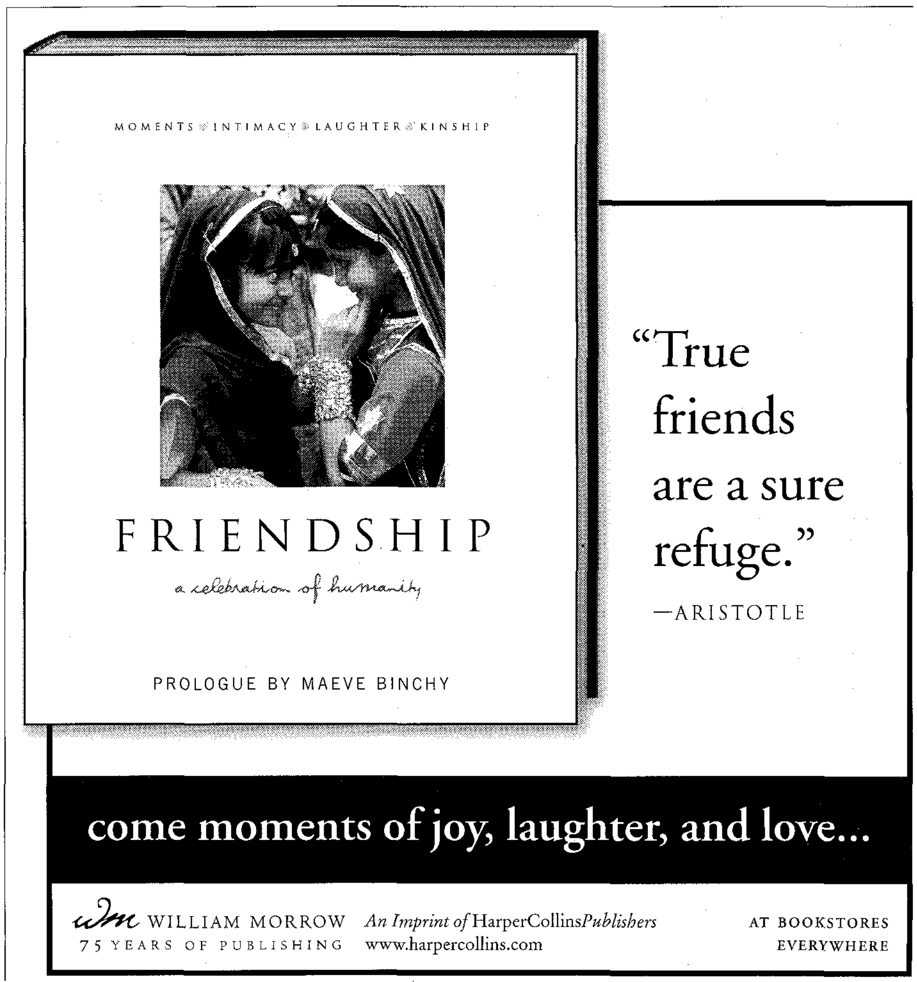
MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—**“Beyond the Easel: Decorative Painting by Bonnard, Vuillard, Denis and Roussel, 1890-1930,”** which traces the careers of the four post-Impressionist painters, is the visual equivalent of a beach book. But it's more Jackie Collins than Tom Clancy. The imagery these artists preferred—cozy interiors, cavorting poodles, outings at the beach—looks far from radical today, but in fin-de-siècle France the infusion of art into everyday life was groundbreaking. Much of the work was commissioned for private homes; a pair of torchères designed by Lucien Levy-Dhurer flanking the entrance signals the decorative, domestic theme. (In a similar but misguided strategy, the gallery walls are painted in murky period colors: oxblood and deep teal). Of the four artists, Vuillard fares best. Though his compact, mosaiclike brushwork can cloy, in a painting like “Windows Overlooking the Woods,” a sweeping view of the French countryside, it takes on the knotty magic of a tapestry. Through Sept. 9. ♦ **“Summer Selections: American Landscape Drawings and Watercolors.”** Nearly fifty summer landscapes and seascapes—all works on paper by American artists—are tucked away in the cozy mezzanine galleries of the American Wing. Maurice Prendergast conveys the simple pleasures of a seaside stroll in a jaunty watercolor of nineteenth-century day-trippers. On a darker note, Thomas Cole's fastidious drawing “The Wounded Indian Slaking His Death-Thirst” pits the eternity of nature against the fragility of life, as massive boulders and contorted trees dwarf the tiny stooping figure. Frequent visitors to the museum will get a kick out of Frederick Arthur Bridgman's studies of the Temple of Dendur, portrayed against a view of Egypt as opposed to the familiar one of Central Park. Through Sept. 2. ♦ **“Dancing on the Roof: Photography and the Bauhaus (1923-29)”** focusses on the work of László Moholy-Nagy and his students at the Weimar haven for artistic experiment. Through Aug. 26. ♦ In summertime, the museum's roof is transformed into Met Hampton (a bikini-free zone). This year, the sun worshippers and singles who mob the roof on weekend evenings share their turf with five large sculptures by Joel Shapiro. Three are cast in bronze, two in aluminum (one painted fire-engine red and the other cobalt blue). All five employ a similar formal strategy: square and rectangular bars are joined together at apparently haphazard angles. The arrangements have a Constructivist flavor and, in the case of the colored sculptures, invite an anthropomorphic reading, with the bars legible as arms, trunks, and legs. But the most ambitious piece, which is twenty-four feet high and looks gravitationally impossible, resembles a tumbling game of pickup sticks. Through late fall. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—An antidote to Gehry fever, the first half of the Mies van der Rohe extravaganza has opened with “Mies in Berlin.” Matching its subject's famous simplicity, the show is a calmly paced bildungsroman, tracing a thirty-year progression from Schinkelesque prodigy to modernist master. Understandably, the show's curators, Terence Riley and Barry Bergdoll, worried that canonical projects like the Tugendhat House and the Barcelona Pavilion might seem too familiar. Their decision to freshen things up with Thomas Ruff's cloying colorized photographs is the show's only lapse. Otherwise, it's easy to fall under the spell of Mies's planar vision, his integration of landscape and garden design (more suited to a Californian than a Germanic climate), and his infectious love of *betonte Leere,* or heightened emptiness. A complementary show (at the Whitney) picks up where this one leaves off, with Mies's arrival in the United States in 1938. Through Sept. 11. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, and Thursdays, 10:30 to 5:45; Fridays, 10:30 to 8:15.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—At Frank Gehry's first retrospective, at the Whitney in 1986, undulant titanium roofs and wriggling walls were nowhere in sight. The Los Angeles-based architect seemed a quirky regional figure, fond of unorthodox materials (cardboard, chain-link fencing) and given to chopping projects into multiple room-size buildings. Nobody could have predicted that he would soon be the world's most sought-after and publicized architect. This new, profoundly exhilarating show tracks Gehry's path to Bilbao, and offers working models of current projects in Scotland, Germany, Cleveland, Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York. It's too much to absorb in a single visit, but even a quick walk-through will leave visitors delighted, buoyed, amazed—and a little nostalgic for the plumb-line architecture that Gehry's fluid, crumpling planes seem poised to supplant. Through Aug. 26. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 9 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 9 to 8.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART
Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—For his first New York retrospective, Wayne Thiebaud's career has been served up in four courses, beginning with dessert. During his pastry period, Thiebaud turned cafeteria fare—not just wedges of cake and pie but a whole alphabet of prepared foods—into something enduringly wry and lovely, a celebration of everyday artifice. The stiff and studied portraits that follow are the show's weakest moment, but Thiebaud returns to form in the subsequent cityscapes and farmland scenes, creating steep, unapologetic Arcadias. There are echoes of Hopper, Diebenkorn, and Johns throughout, but none of Thiebaud's predecessors have his cool, confectionary jauntiness. Through Sept. 23. ♦ Picking up where MOMA's more engaging early Mies exhibition leaves off, **“Mies in America”** looks at how the Master of Less and the Culture of More altered each other. Focussing on a few major commissions—among them the Lake Shore Drive Towers, in Chicago; the Seagram Building; and the Chicago Convention Hall—the exhibition offers a kind of dry immersion in Mies's immaterialist aesthetic. With acres of bland drawings and only a few models, this show isn't going to change many minds: skeptics will leave with a renewed conviction that Mies's buildings are three-dimensional graph paper. But the lucid wall texts, prepared by a curatorial team led by Phyllis Lambert (who first worked with Mies as the client for the Seagram Building), remind us that his simple effects depended upon a host of tweaked, ingenious details. Through Sept. 23. ♦ The Tower of Babel has nothing on the Whitney this month, as Joseph Grigely transforms the lobby gallery into a chapel of white noise. The artist became deaf at the age of ten, and conducts conversations with nonsigners through notes scribbled by them on scraps of paper. Grigely can speak, so we read only one side of the dialogue, ranging from a series of chitchat non sequiturs (“loud wind now”


MOMENTS ❧ INTIMACY ❧ LAUGHTER ❧ KINSHIP

FRIENDSHIP
a celebration of humanity

PROLOGUE BY MAEVE BINCHY

“True friends are a sure refuge.”
—ARISTOTLE

come moments of joy, laughter, and love...

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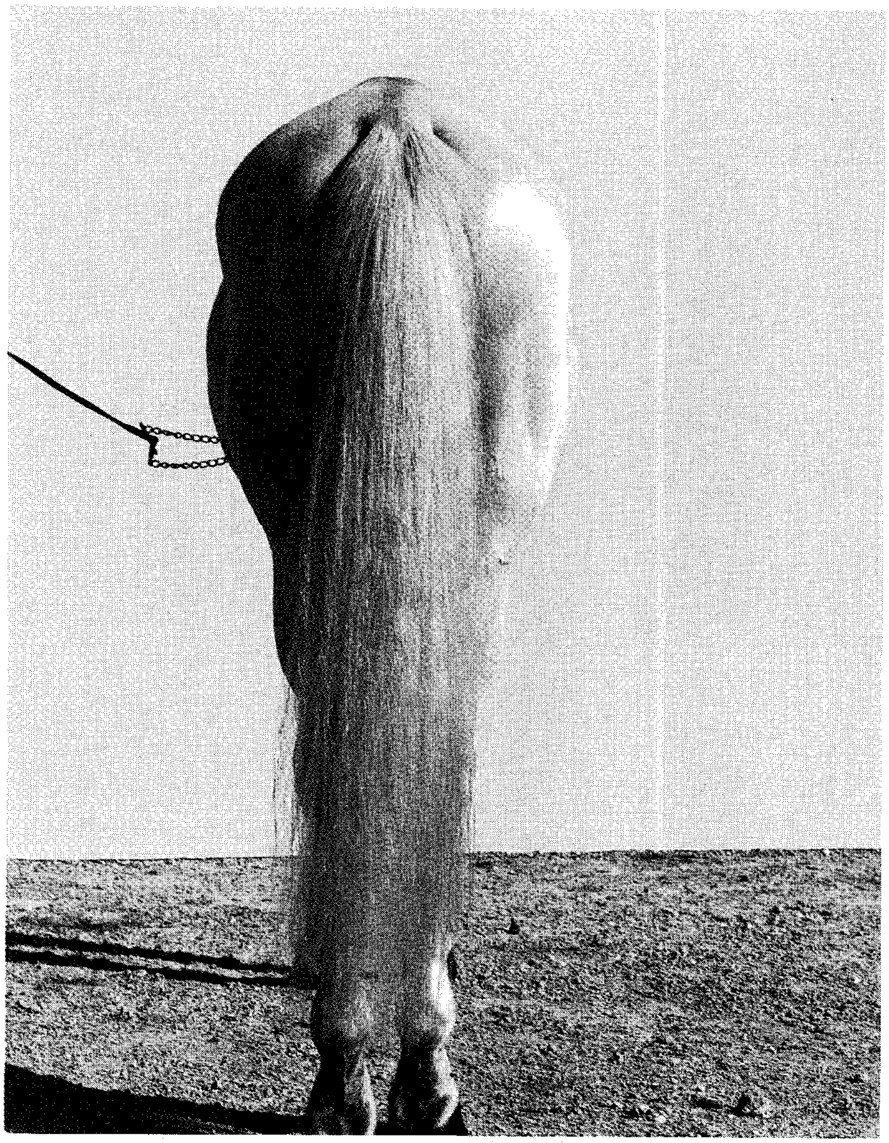
followed by "Wim Wenders, too") to emphatic declarations ("I want 10%"). More than twenty-five hundred of these scraps are installed floor to ceiling in the oval space, the visual equivalent of a drone. Through Sept. 9. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and weekends, 11 to 6, Fridays, 1 to 9.)

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
Central Park W. at 79th St. (769-5100)—The Discovery Room, a hands-on educational program conceived in the museum's dark belly, has just moved into its new and permanent headquarters, a sunny, two-thousand-square-foot play space next door to the familiar big ceremonial canoe at the Seventy-seventh Street entrance. Inside the room, a replica of an African baobab tree spreads its branches over displays about the scientists and artists who studied and re-created it, and a working dinosaur dig busies young paleontologists. There's a surprisingly wide variety of specimens for little paws to hold and shake and investigate, including an outsized dinosaur-toe bone, a mastodon tusk, and, resting in a shredded paper nest, in drawer 52 of a brand-new child-sized specimen cabinet, one emu egg, now broken. The management describes the accident as a learning experience. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)



"White Horse Ass, West Palm Beach," in "A Dog and Pony Show" (see Photography).

STEVEN KLEIN

BROOKLYN MUSEUM OF ART
Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—Leon Golub, the dour dean of political painters, is the subject of a new retrospective, covering almost fifty years of art work. Like many careers, Golub's is U-shaped: the earliest and the most recent paintings are alike in their resolutely grim surrealism. In between, though, there are two marvellous periods. The first comes in the mid-sixties, with paintings like "Gigantomachy II," which depicts a Donnybrook among titanic combatants. The second, marked by paintings of death squads and torturers, elevated Golub's reputation in the eighties. Still jolting pictures such as "White Squad IV (El Salvador)" show bad guys at work—and remind us whose team we're on. Through Aug. 19. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

AMERICAN CRAFT MUSEUM
40 W. 53rd St. (956-3535)—**"Origamic Architecture."** Each diminutive Chrysler Building, Notre Dame, and Guggenheim in this mind-boggling show of pop-up architecture started life as a single sheet of paper. The hybrid art form was inaugurated twenty years ago by the Tokyo professor Masahiro Chatani, who took on the ancient Japanese art of paper-folding with a pair of scissors. Anyone who ever labored over snowflake cutouts in grade school will find it hard to believe the miniature miracles here. Through Sept. 2. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 10 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8.)

COOPER-HEWITT NATIONAL DESIGN MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 91st St. (849-8300)—**"Rooms with a View"** surveys the history of landscape wallpapers, from Belle Époque vignettes of cozy ruins to the magnificent three-hundred-and-sixty-degree panoramas of the middle of the nineteenth century. Three superb examples of the latter occupy rooms of their own. It's hard to say which is the loveliest, but the exquisite craftsmanship of Zuber and Cie's 1849 "El Dorado" or Dufour's 1825 "Vues d'Italie" (thirty-three panels printed in seven shades of ochre!) make the subsequent sampling of quasi-abstract twentieth-century designs seem almost insultingly meagre. Through Oct. 14. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

FRICK COLLECTION
1 E. 70th St. (288-0700)—While other museums undergo endless expansion and renovation, the Frick, a happy island of stasis, benefits by hosting yet another loan show. This time, the visitors are drawings from the Smith College Museum of Art. The sixty-eight sheets offer an idiosyncratic tour of Western draftsmanship, from Dieric Bouts (his only known drawing is on view) through Barnet Newman. Few of the images are famous; many are amazing. For sheer charm, however, none can top Louis-Leopold Boilly's "The Happy Family," which depicts a fop, his swan-necked wife, and their three tots engaged in a communal smooch. Domestic bliss doesn't get any giddier than this. Through Aug. 12. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. (869-8089)—**"Celebrity Caricature in America."** Years before slugfests broke out between public personalities and the media who tail them, celebrity caricature was all the rage, reaching its heyday between the wars. The stylized imagery was satirical but never savage, and the subjects—from mayors to movie stars to magazine editors—loved the limelight. In addition to portraits of Fiorello LaGuardia and Greta Garbo, the show features everyone from Al Capone to Enrico Caruso to *The New Yorker's* own Harold Ross, disguised as Eustace Tilly. Through Aug. 31. (Open Mondays, and Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 7:30.)

STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM
144 W. 125th St. (864-4500)—**"For the Record"** brings the studio into the museum with work from three young artists-in-residence, Julie Mehretu, Senam Okudzeto, and Nadine Robinson. The loudest work is Robinson's: a shag canvas of human hair, coupled with a wall of speakers playing snippets from a mass of turntables. Mehretu and Okudzeto offer more traditional drawings and paintings. Okudzeto's inky silhouettes seem equally influenced by Kara Walker's cutouts, Chris Offili's Afro inkblots, and the opening credits of a James Bond movie. Through Sept. 16. (Open Wednesdays and Thursdays, noon to 6; Fridays, noon to 8; Saturdays and Sundays, 10 to 6.)

GALLERIES-UPTOWN

Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.

JAMES BARSNESS
With a ballpoint pen and a spigotlike imagination, Barsness continues to create manic surrealist menageries. Reindeer, rats, centipedes, and superheroes, along with sundry Boschian hybrids, cavort across his big dance-floor-like pictures, committing myriad acts of vice and folly. What do they all add up to? Barsness seems to have various semicoherent allegorical schemes in mind, but the end products demonstrate his own cheerfully pathological fecundity. Through Aug. 17. (Adams, 41 W. 57th St. 644-5665.)

DON VAN VLIET
Back when he was singing lyrics like "I love you, you big dummy. Ha ha ha ha. Quit asking why," Van Vliet, then known as Captain Beefheart,

seemed unassailably weird. As a painter, though, the odd thing about Van Vliet is how honorable and categorizable his work feels. In this sampling of paintings from the eighties, the brashly colored nudes, deer, and monkeys have clearly floated in from the German Expressionist sector of the collective unconscious. They look great—full of coarse impasto and charm—but never quite unfamiliar. Through Sept. 8. (Werner, 4 E. 77th St. 988-1623.)

"ALTERATIONS"
The twenty artists in this textile show weave together the conceptual and the decorative. Erik Hanson's elegant smoke-blue needlepoint is based on an abstract photograph, its exposure determined by the length of a David Bowie song. Devorah Sperber's Persian rug, an elaborate parlor trick, is made of countless colored pen caps; it appears pixellated until viewed in the accompanying convex mirror. Jim Hodges's nosegay of silk scraps serves as an achingly sweet reminder that summer, like life, is fleeting. Through Aug. 31. (James Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St. 535-5767.)

"ZONING"
This show of dance- and night-club-related work includes two dance floors: one, installed a few inches above the gallery floor, is drawn in unfixed charcoal on plywood, and viewers walking over it appear to be looking down on gyrating bodies. Another floor, in patterned linoleum, is attached to the ceiling upstairs, and lit by a disco ball on the floor. The more conventional art—black-and-white photographs of capoeira dancers on the walls downstairs, and videos of Mexico City headbangers upstairs—is overshadowed by the trompe-l'oeil club décor. Through Aug. 19. (The Project, 427 W. 126th St. 662-8610.)

Short List

ALEXANDER LIBERMAN
Ameringer Howard, 41 E. 57th St. 935-1110. Through Aug. 10.

GALLERIES-CHELSEA

"ABSTRACT"
Six painters, none well known in New York, indulge in methodical, even maniacal, processes to create the works in this show. Dennis Hollingworth's wet-into-wet technique has a macho physicality; the results resemble a Gerhard Richter smear painting on steroids, with spiny blobs of paint rupturing the surface like miniature explosions. Joyce Kim dries drips and splatters on glass, then collages the peeled remnants onto monochrome canvases; it's like Colorforms crossed with color-field painting. The least tricky and most lyrical of the bunch is Shoshana Dentz. Her canvas "Liar," with its layer upon layer of translucent yolk-yellow paint, is as impossibly palpable as sunshine. Through Aug. 10. (Klagsbrun, 526 W. 26th St. 243-3335.)

"LARGER THAN LIFE"
Like an old men's bar, this group show includes some charismatic veterans and some genteel duffers. In the latter category there is Aristodimos Kaldis, an eminently likable sort of Greek Chagall. But the spotlight belongs to Paul Georges and Leland Bell, two very different éminences grises of the New York School. Georges is the Dionysian one: the electric lime-green squiggles of his "Calla Lillies" are gleefully blinding. Bell was the Apollonian control freak, turning domestic crises into a form of stylized theatre. Among the works on view is his last and possibly weirdest painting, in which the artist and his wife and daughter respond with calm horror to what seems to be a speaking pigeon. Through Sept. 28. (Center for Figurative Painting, 115 W. 30th St. 868-3452.)

"PANIC"
The gallery goes code red for summer (note the vermillion ink on the checklist). Curator Dan Cooney was inspired by David Wojnarowicz's photograph of buffaloes stampeding off a cliff and that image, by turns alarming and absurd, sets the tone for this eclectic show. The phobias depicted here range from fear of flying (Karen Yasinsky's droll drawing of airplane passengers strung up by oxygen masks, their abandoned seats upholstered in a Froot Loop palette of pink, yellow, and orange) to fear of being pinned under a giant block of ice (a photographic self-portrait by performance artist Patty Chang). Ida Applebroog's quietly harrowing drawing of an apparently flayed head, floating disembodied below a seated woman, is enough to set your heart racing. Through Aug. 17. (Julie Saul, 535 W. 22nd St. 627-2410.)

"WE SET OFF IN HIGH SPIRITS"
This audacious group show (perhaps the best of the summer) is the brainchild of Dutch artists-cum-fashion photographers Inez van Lamsweerde and Vinoodh Matadin. Pairing lesser-known European artists (the young London-based sculptor Steven Gontarski, the late German photographer Ed van der Elsken) with name-brand Americans (Jeff Koons, James Rosenquist), the curators expose influences and some unexpected affinities. A giddily cheesy Mel Ramos shares a wall with a small de Kooning "Woman," a mere fluffer to the Dutchman's star. But the unabashed centerpiece is the Swiss Photo-Realist Franz Gertsch's canvas from 1973, a twelve-foot-long panorama of three girls primping, a scene so haute seventies it looks like a Mario Testino photo from this year's *Vogue*. In the back, the curators première their first music video, directed for Björk, in collaboration with the design firm M/M (Paris). Through Aug. 17. (Matthew Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. 243-0020.)

Short List

PETER PINCHBECK
Greene Naftali, 526 W. 26th St. 463-7770. Through Aug. 10.

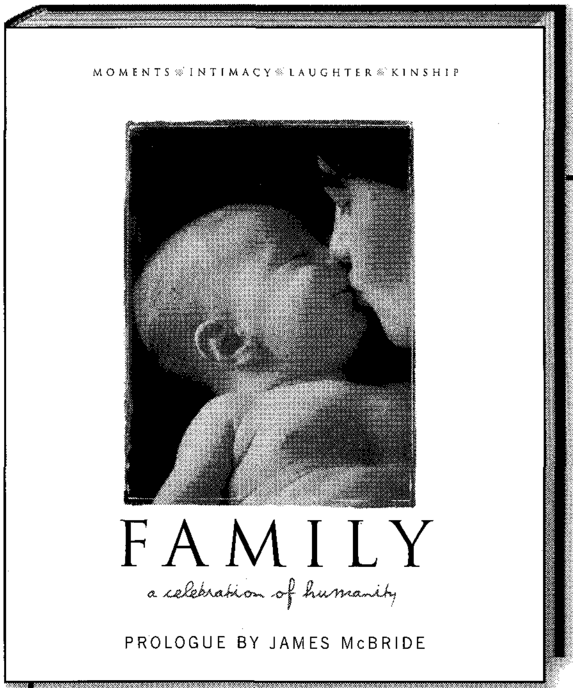
GALLERIES-DOWNTOWN

LARRY KAGAN
Kagan's wire sculptures look like run-of-the-mill modernist abstractions, but they're as satisfying as party tricks. The trick is that each bramble of arcs and zigzags casts a linear shadow on the wall which amounts to a drawing—of, for example, a cylinder, cube, grid, or beach chair. At their best, when form and effect seem perfectly incongruous, these paintings will make even the most affectless viewers feel a prickle of delight. Through Sept. 3. (Goldstrom, 560 Broadway. 941-9175.)

TEUN HOCKS
Painted photography is a notoriously drecky genre, but this Dutch artist handles it with a rare, sweet-tempered aplomb. All of his pictures feature a neatly dressed figure—Hocks himself—in a mildly surreal predicament. He's a logger, cutting down a forest with an oar; a birder, leaning forlornly against a tree; a sleeper whose bed straddles a path that winds through fairy-tale hills. It's easy to see echoes of Magritte and Rockwell here, but the connection isn't dishonorable: Hocks shares their weird knack for tweaking banality till it glimmers. Through Aug. 10. (P.P.O.W, 476 Broome St. 941-8642.)

AUCTIONS & ANTIQUES

SWANN
Aug. 1 at 2: Vintage posters, a sale amply stocked with the usual favorites—sensuous Mucha girls, enticements for travel to distant lands, and fanciful advertising images (such as a Michelin poster circa 1913 featuring a cigar-chomping Bibendum, the Michelin Man, showing us the sole of his shoe, well-studded for extra traction). But there are surprises as well, not all of them pleasant: an Italian Fascist poster from 1942 depicting an African-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American flier in a blood-red bomber jacket, smashing a bombed-out city with his fist; a poster for "Jud Süss," Veit Harlan's notoriously anti-Semitic Nazi propaganda film; and an unintentionally macabre Art Nouveau image promoting an up-to-date Parisian maternity ward, with babies' heads sprouting from floral stalks. (104 E. 25th St. 254-4710.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

KONRAD CRAMER
Cramer (1888-1963), a German expatriate who became one of the first American abstract painters, also hung around Alfred Stieglitz's gallery, 291, and experimented with photography. He used crumpled cellophane between Polaroid lenses to create some cute Cubist refractions, and he tinkered with photogram and solarization techniques to make easy-on-the-eye nudes and still-lifes. Most of the handsome vintage silver prints here are boldly signed "Cramer/Woodstock," as if to credit the upstate artists' colony as an equal collaborator in his playful machine-age modernism. Through Aug. 24. (Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. 752-1223.)

"A DOG AND PONY SHOW"
These dog and horse photographs have some supporting human characters, including a picture of Elizabeth Taylor on the set of "Giant" and one of Anjelica Huston from *London Vogue* (1972), but the show also offers substantial collections of work from two photographers who specialize in animals, Steven Klein and Deborah Samuel. Klein's best horsey images betray a wry visual humor, as in "White Horse Ass, West Palm Beach." Samuel's portraits of pedigreed and often prizewinning pooches—Afghan hounds, basenjis, Dalmatians, Lhasa Apsos, Newfoundlands, whippets, and so on—overcome the dogs' limited patience with being photographed to catch each pampered subject mugging or playing or both. Through Aug. 3. (Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway. 966-6223.)

"MORE THAN ONE"
This sensitive collection of multiple portraits also explores a theme of the moment—size. The head of a larger-than-life little boy in Richard Avedon's mural-size print of "Allen Ginsberg's Family, Paterson, New Jersey, May 3, 1970" is as big as an entire James Van Der Zee portrait of a church communion class, while Arthur S. Mole and John D. Thomas's eleven-by-fourteen-inch aerial shot of hundreds of people forming a portrait of Woodrow Wilson's face reduces each subject to a dot. The good stuff, particularly work by Neal Slavin and August Sander, looks even better than usual in this crowd. Through Aug. 24. (Rosen, 525 W. 24th St. 627-6000.)

"SIZE MATTERS"
This show demonstrates photography's elastic relationship with scale in a selection of prints both tiny and vast. A six-by-eight-foot print of Walker Evans's signature "Penny Picture Display, Savannah, GA" (taken in 1936 and enlarged for his first retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art, in 1971) hovers over new, snapshot-size works from Saul Fletcher and mid-nineteenth-century still-lifes by William Henry Fox Talbot. Three wallet-size images from Masao Yamamoto's "Box of Ku" are framed individually, like delicate butterflies, while Chuck Close's six-foot-tall "Self-Portrait" (1999) is so large that the artist's highly detailed pores read like passages of abstraction. Through Aug. 10. (Houk, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 750-7070.)

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY
1133 Sixth Ave., at 43rd St. (860-1777)—Sebastião Salgado's **"Migrations: Humanity in Transition."** Over the past seven years, Salgado has visited more than thirty-five countries, travelling with and photographing some of the nearly one hundred million migrants now wandering the planet. Viewers who follow international news may be familiar not only with the trouble spots he's been to—Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia among them—but also with these images, some of which have appeared in major American news magazines. Nevertheless, the effect of seeing them, particularly the sweeping landscapes, as immaculate black-and-white prints filling these large, open galleries, remains powerful. Through Sept. 9. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, 10-5; Fridays, 10-8; and Saturdays and Sundays, 10-6.)

Short List

JAMES BIDGOOD
Morris, 465 W. 23rd St. 727-2752.
Through Aug. 17.

VIVIAN CHERRY
SoHo Triad, 107 Grand St. 965-9500.
Through Aug. 5.

HERBERT LIST
Miller, 524 W. 26th St. 366-4774.
Through Aug. 17.

"MAGNUM: A COMMUNITY OF THOUGHT"
Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. 334-0010.
Through Aug. 4.

"SURF'S UP!"
Meyerowitz, 580 Broadway. 625-3434.
Through Aug. 10.

"WOMAN/GODDESS"
India Center, 530 W. 25th St. 462-4221.
Through Aug. 11.

CLASSICAL MUSIC
OPERA

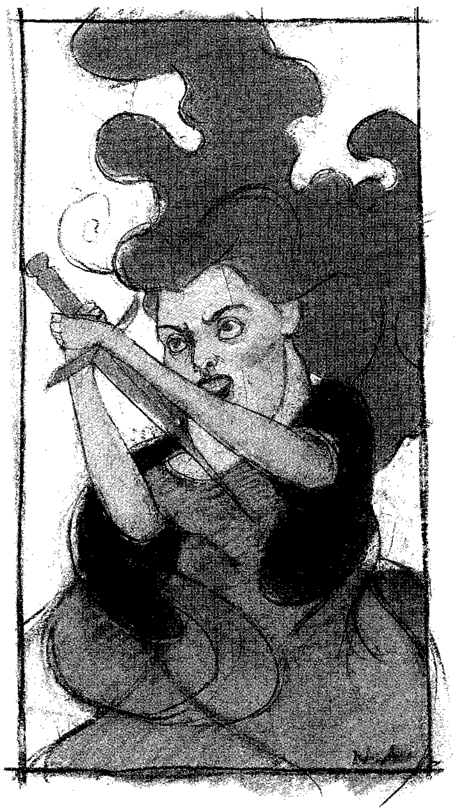
NEW YORK GRAND OPERA COMPANY
With **"Falstaff,"** Verdi's last opera and only comedy, the indomitable American maestro Vincent La Selva reaches the twenty-eighth and final stop on his eight-year journey through the composer's complete operas, presenting each in its original version, in chronological order. While La Selva's recent productions have not been without their shortcomings—uneven, if lusty, singing and an undependable sound system—few conductors can match his profound understanding of Verdi's music. Directed by James Lucas, with sets by Hal Tiné; the singers include David Ward (in the title role), Hallie Neill, Wen Zhang, Nancy Cruz Benenson, Theodore Lambrinos, and Pablo Veguilla. (Central Park Summerstage, mid-Park at 72nd St. Aug. 1 at 7:30. No tickets necessary. The rain date is Aug. 6 at 7:30.)

CONCERTS AROUND TOWN

MOSTLY MOZART FESTIVAL
Aug. 1 at 8: Gerard Schwarz conducts a repeat of the gala opening-night program, including Beethoven's "Pastoral" Symphony, Mozart's Symphony No. 20 in D Major, and Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante for Violin and Viola, with Itzhak Perlman and Pinchas Zukerman. (Avery Fisher Hall.) ♦ Aug. 2 at 8: The Emerson String Quartet, the pianist Leon Fleisher, the flutist Michael Parloff, and the bassist Timothy Cobb present music by Mendelssohn (the Quartet in A Minor) and Mozart (including the Piano Concerto No. 12, in a chamber arrangement). The Emerson also offers a brief pre-concert recital, at 7. (Avery Fisher Hall.) ♦ Aug. 3-4 at 8: While Schumann is justly prized as a composer of songs, symphonies, and piano pieces, it was the oratorio "Paradise and the Peri" (1843) that made his international reputation. Like its heroine—the progeny of a human being and a fallen angel, who seeks entrance into heaven—the work transcends boundaries; with its nimble orchestration and flowing lyrical continuity, it conflates the genres of opera and oratorio and mixes sacred and secular themes. Schwarz conducts a rare revival, featuring the vocal soloists Christine Goerke, Kristine Jepson, Robert Brubaker, Peter Rose, and others. (Avery Fisher Hall.) ♦ Aug. 5 at 5: Europa Galante, a period-instrument group that plays music of the Italian Baroque with both elegance and bite, presents works by Vivaldi, Corelli, and others. (Alice Tully

Hall.) ♦ Aug. 6 at 8: The Tallis Scholars make their Mostly Mozart début performing German sacred music from a more sober, pre-Mozartean age, by Praetorius, Schütz, Buxtehude, and Bach. (Alice Tully Hall.) ♦ Aug. 7-8 at 8: Christian Zacharias plays and conducts music by Mozart (the Piano Concertos Nos. 6 and 19), Vanhal, and Haydn (the brilliant "Hornsignal" Symphony). (Avery Fisher Hall. 721-6500.)

NORDIC VOICES
As part of Trinity Church's "Vive la France!" festival, this mixed vocal sextet from Scandinavia offers a program of French music from the medieval (Manchicourt and Perotin) to the modern (D'Indy's "Deus Israel" and Messiaen's "O Sacrum Convivium"). (Broadway at Wall St. Aug. 2 at 1. No tickets necessary.)



Glimmerglass Opera presents Britten's "The Rape of Lucretia" on Aug. 5.

N. ASCENCIOS

BARGEMUSIC
Aug. 2 at 7:30 and Aug. 5 at 4: Music by Bach, Brahms (the sweet Violin Sonata No. 2), and Beethoven (the "Archduke" Trio), performed by the violinist Martin Beaver, the cellist Ronald Thomas, and the pianist Edward Auer. ♦ Aug. 3-4 at 7:30: A courtly program of music for flute, cello, and piano by Haydn, Weber (the Trio in G Minor), Debussy (the Cello Sonata), and Lowell Liebermann, spiced up with a crazy touch of Villa-Lobos ("Jet Whistle," for flute and cello). The musicians are Julia Scolnik, Bion Tsang, and Randall Hodgkinson. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-2083.)

SUMMERGARDEN: "COMPOSERS CONFRONT THEIR TRADITIONS"
While many Latin-American composers have developed their native folk musics into classical compositions, the Cuban composer Alejandro García Caturla (1906-40) stands out for his ability to infuse his Cuban traditions with extreme, modernist influences. Three living composers (Sofia Gubaidulina, Oleg Felzer, and Miguel del Aguila) fill out the conductor Joel Sachs's program with the New Juilliard Ensemble, which features Caturla's "Primera Suite Cubana"; the soloists include the pianist Alpin Hong and the baritone James Martin. (Bryant Park, Sixth Ave. at 42nd St. Aug. 3-4 at 6. No tickets necessary.)

SUNDAYS ON THE ISLAND
Adrienne Kim, a regular visitor to the charming Le Refuge Inn, offers a solo piano recital featuring music by Bach (the Partita in D Major), Schubert, and Debussy ("L'Isle Joyeuse"). (620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. 914-664-6934. Aug. 5 at 12:30.)

JUILLIARD ARTISTS IN CONCERT
Lunchtime strollers in the South Street Seaport area are free to sample the offerings of this annual series, given by students and alumni of the Juilliard School in the Continental Center's public atrium. This week's recital is by the cellist Louise Dubin, who presents music by Bach (the Fifth Suite), the cellist-composer Gaspar Cassadó, and the accessible Australian composer Carl Vine ("Inner World"). (180 Maiden Lane, at Front St. Aug. 7 at 12:30. No tickets necessary.)

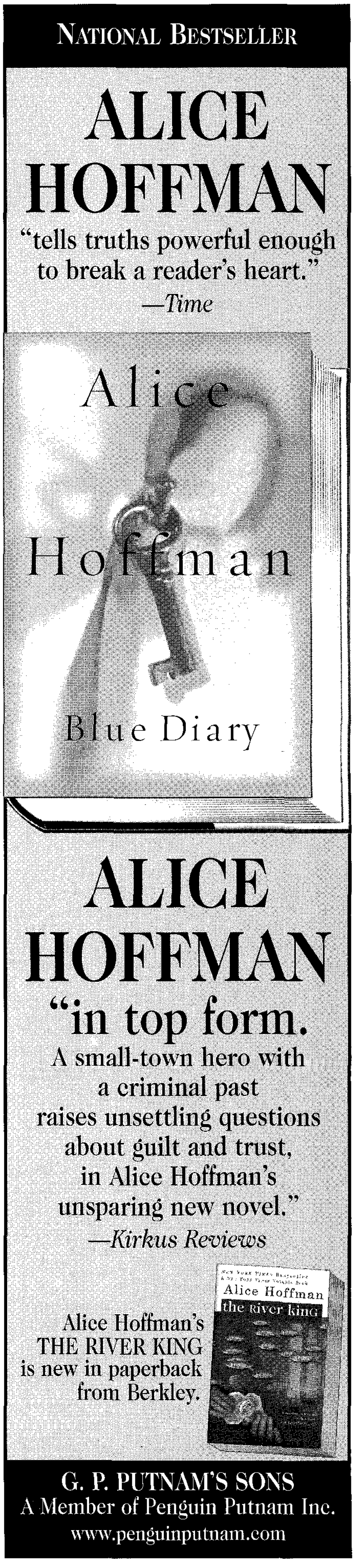
STEPHEN SALTERS
The baritone and the pianist Linda Osborn-Blaschke offer a light American program (including music by Barber, Copland, and the folk-song composer John Jacob Niles and a selection of spirituals) suitable for a summer night. (Naumburg Band Shell, Central Park, mid-Park south of 72nd St. Aug. 7 at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

OUT OF TOWN

BRIDGEHAMPTON CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL
The eighteenth annual festival begins. Aug. 1 at 8: Piano trios by both Fanny and Felix Mendelssohn frame "Manned Flight," a work for flute and strings by Stefania de Kenessey; the musicians include the flutist Marya Martin and the violist Rebecca Young. ♦ Aug. 5 at 6:30: Bach's *Brandenburg Concertos* Nos. 4 and 5 share the program with music by Mozart (including the Piano Concerto No. 13 in C Major, with Jeremy Denk). (Bridgehampton Presbyterian Church, Bridgehampton, N.Y. For more information, call 631-537-6368.)

TANGLEWOOD
Aug. 1 at 8:30: Dawn Upshaw, taking over from Lorraine Hunt Lieberson, repeats last season's Peter Sellars staging of Bach's Cantata No. 199—"Mein Herze schwimmt in Blut," in which the composer's Lutheran Pietism reaches an almost perverse intensity. Music by Messiaen, glowing with French Catholic color, leavens the program, which also features songs by Fauré (from his mysterious late cycle "La Chanson d'Eve") and Wolf; the assisting performers include the pianist Gilbert Kalish, the bassist Edwin Barker, the oboist Peggy Pearson, the organist Arthur Haas, and the Lydian Quartet. (Ozawa Hall.) ♦ Aug. 3 at 8:30: Upshaw returns to the Shed to sing Britten's "Les Illuminations" (usually sung by a tenor, though it was written for the soprano Sophie Wyss) with the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the conductor David Robertson, making his Tanglewood début, who also leads music by Mozart (the "Jupiter" Symphony), Ravel, and Mahler (Britten's chamber-orchestra arrangement of "What the Wild Flowers Tell Me," from the Symphony No. 3). A chamber recital of music by Mozart and Verdi (the String Quartet) featuring members of the B.S.O. precedes the concert, at 6, in Ozawa Hall. ♦ Aug. 4 at 8:30: A concert performance of Strauss's "Salome," with Deborah Voigt (in the title role), Jane Henschel, Siegfried Jerusalem, and Falk Struckmann (as John the Baptist). In an age in which nothing seems shocking anymore, this pitch-black setting of Oscar Wilde's outrageous play—which moves along with a balletic, Mozartean grace—remains a gloriously seductive entertainment. Seiji Ozawa, always at his best when working on a big canvas, conducts. ♦ Aug. 5 at 2:30: André Previn lowers the temperature with a lighter Strauss-Mozart-Haydn program (with Kiri Te Kanawa), which opens with the conductor's "Diversions," for orchestra. (Lenox, Mass. 617-266-1200.)

PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA
The orchestra begins its thirty-sixth season at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center. All of the



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Alice Hoffman's THE RIVER KING is new in paperback from Berkley.

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month's concerts save one are conducted by Charles Dutoit; the programs, packed with orchestral blockbusters, are audience-friendly to a fault, but this is, after all, a blockbuster orchestra. Aug. 1 at 8:15: An all-Beethoven program, featuring the Piano Concerto No. 3 (with Yefim Bronfman). ♦ Aug. 2 at 8:15: Erich Kunzel, dean of pops conductors, directs a concert of music from Hollywood movies (with the pianist Michael Chertock). ♦ Aug. 3 at 8:15: Emanuel Ax is the guest artist for a program of music by Mozart (the Piano Concerto No. 14 in E-Flat Major), Britten, Schubert (the "Unfinished" Symphony), and Stravinsky. ♦ Aug. 4 at 8:15: Music by Brahms and Mendelssohn (the Violin Concerto, with Gil Shaham), along with a contemporary work, "On Taoism," by Tan Dun. (Saratoga Springs, N.Y. For more information, call 518-587-3330. Through Aug. 18.)

CARAMOOR

Aug. 2 at 4:30: The cellist Alexis Pia Gerlach and the pianist Noreen Cassidy-Polera offer a program of Rachmaninoff (the Cello Sonata in G Minor), Beethoven, Bach, and Piazzolla ("Le Grand Tango"). ♦ Aug. 3 at 6:30: Brent Michael Davids, the leading American Indian composer, makes a musical commentary on the literary treatment of his race in the world première of "The Last of James Fenimore Cooper," the highlight of the Miró Quartet's concert in the Spanish Courtyard; Haydn's "Frog" Quartet and Brahms's Quartet in C Minor complete the program. ♦ Aug. 4, starting at 1: The Caramoor Jazz Festival concludes with an all-day lineup of top jazz personalities, including Jane Ira Bloom, Randy Weston, the Joe Lovano Nonet, Randy Brecker, and the Tommy Flanagan Trio. The last set is scheduled to begin at 8; one ticket grants admission to all events. ♦ Aug. 5 at 4:30: Dennis Keene, music director of New York's Voices of Ascension, leads the soloists, chorus, and orchestra of the Dennis Keene Choral Festival in Bach's "Magnificat" and Mozart's Mass in C Minor. (Katonah, N.Y. 914-232-1252.)

GLIMMERGLASS OPERA

Four new productions, presented in repertory. Aug. 2 at 8 and Aug. 4 at 1:30: Chabrier's comic opera "L'Étoile," with Torrance Blaisdell, Karina Gauvin, and Christine Abraham; the conductor is Stewart Robertson. ♦ Aug. 3 at 8 and Aug. 6 at 2: Mozart's "Le Nozze di Figaro," directed by Stephen Lawless. With Dean Ely, Joyce Guyer, Nicole Heaston, Valerie Komar, and Christopher Schaldenbrand; George Manahan. ♦ Aug. 4 at 8 and Aug. 7 at 2: Handel's "Agrippina," directed by Lillian Groag, with Alexandra Coku, Beth Clayton, Karen Wierzba, Derrick Parker, and David Walker; Harry Bicket. ♦ Aug. 5 at 2: Christopher Alden's staging of Britten's "The Rape of Lucretia," a sordid tale of love, honor, and politics in ancient Rome, with Michelle DeYoung (in the title role), Nathan Gunn, Christine Goerke, and William Burden; Robertson. (Cooperstown, N.Y. 607-547-2255.)

OPHRA YERUSHALMI: "INSTALLING CHOPIN"

The Israeli-American pianist ruminates on the continuing power of the composer's music, presenting an all-Chopin recital (mostly of smaller pieces) along with a video of "Chopin: Score for Fifteen Pianos," an installation by the Sicilian artist Emilio Isgrò. (Guild Hall, 158 Main St., East Hampton, N.Y. 631-324-4050. Aug. 2 at 8.)

CHESTNUT HILL CONCERTS

Ronald Thomas, one of Bargemusic's artistic directors, and his colleagues move their water-borne Bach-Brahms-Beethoven program of Aug. 2 to the dry land of coastal Connecticut. (First Congregational Church, Meetinghouse Lane, Madison, Conn. Aug. 3 at 8. For more information, call 203-245-5736.)

ASTON MAGNA FESTIVAL

Excerpts from Henry Purcell's masque, "The Indian Queen," highlight the final program of this noted early-music festival, which also includes Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 and Cantata No. 82, "Ich habe genug"; the performers include the sopranos Nancy Armstrong and Roberta Anderson, the tenor William Hite, the baritone David Ripley, and the violinist Daniel Stepner. (Olin Hall, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, N.Y. 845-758-7425. Aug. 3 at 8. ♦ St. James Church, Route 7 at Taconic Ave., Great Barrington, Mass. 800-875-7156. Aug. 4 at 6.)

MARLBORO MUSIC FESTIVAL

This legendary festival, devoted to the classic chamber works of the German repertory, offers concerts each weekend through Aug. 12; programs are announced one week in advance on the festival's Web site (www.marlboromusic.org). (Marlboro, Vt. 802-254-2394. Aug. 3-5.)

MOHAWK TRAIL CONCERTS: WILLIAM BOLCOM AND JOAN MORRIS

In this long-running duet—two of America's most insouciant entertainers—the virtuoso composer-pianist plays straight man to his mezzo-soprano wife, whose persona is an endearing combination of Patti LuPone and Gracie Burns. Their classic recital program, featuring songs by Harold Arlen and Yip Harburg, Leiber and Stoller, Kurt Weill, Michael John LaChiusa, and of course, Bolcom and his frequent collaborator Arnold Weinstein, has long been polished to perfection. (Helen Hills Chapel, Smith College, Northampton, Mass. Aug. 3 at 8. ♦ Federated Church, Charlemont, Mass. Aug. 4 at 8. For more information, call 888-682-6873.)

NORFOLK CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL

Aug. 3 at 8: An evening of Schubert (including the "Trout" Quintet), offered by the soprano Rachel Watkins, the pianist Claude Frank, the clarinettist David Krakauer, and the Panocha Quartet. ♦ Aug. 4 at 8: Krakauer returns with his band, Klezmer Madness! (Ellen Battell Stoeckel Estate, Routes 44 and 272, Norfolk, Conn. 860-542-3000.)

SOUTH SHORE MUSIC SERIES: DENIS SHAPOVALOV

The cellist—the gold-medal winner of the 1998 Tchaikovsky Competition—shares the stage with the pianist Alexandre Vershinin for a program of sonatas by Prokofiev, Rachmaninoff, and Shostakovich. (Saugatuck Congregational Church, 245 Post Rd. E., Westport, Conn. 203-222-7070. Aug. 3 at 8.)

MUSIC MOUNTAIN

The Shanghai String Quartet offers a pair of concerts. Aug. 4 at 8: Music by Turina, Bartók (the Quartet No. 4), Brahms (the Clarinet Quintet, with Ethan Sloane), and the Chinese-American composer Zhou Long. ♦ Aug. 5 at 3: A program of Mozart, Schoenberg ("Transfigured Night"), and Beethoven (the riveting "Serioso" Quartet, Op. 95), with the violist Eric Shumsky and the cellist James Wilson. (Falls Village, Conn. 860-824-7126.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

READINGS

Aug. 6 at 7: By Marisa Silver, from her short-story collection, "Babe in Paradise," and by Thomas Beller, from his collection of short stories, "The Sleep-Over Artist." (Half King, 505 W. 23rd St. No tickets necessary.) ♦ Aug. 7 at 7:30: By Karen Plunkett-Powell, from "Remembering Woolworth's," her account of the rise and fall of the pioneering retail chain. (Barnes & Noble, Broadway at 82nd St. No tickets necessary.)

TALK

Aug. 5 at 7: Charles T. Tart, the author of "Altered States of Consciousness" and "Transpersonal Psychologies," offers a lecture titled "God and (Nothing But) the Brain? Scientific Evidence for Taking Spirits Seriously." (Metropolitan Hotel, Lexington Ave. at 51st St. For more information, call 628-1550.)

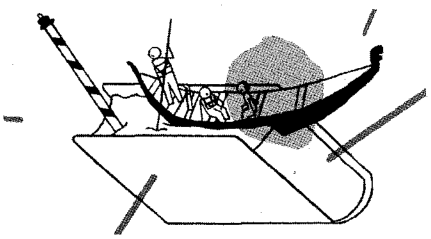
WALKS

Aug. 3 at 10 A.M. The longtime tour guide Alfred Pommer points out the gargoyles and caryatids of Manhattan on a stroll through Madison Square, Gramercy Square, Union Square, and Greenwich Village. For more information, call 334-2211, ext. 101. ♦ Aug. 4 at 1: The self-described Jack Finney cultist Philip E. Schoenberg stops by places of import in Finney's novel "Time and Again" on a walk through the Upper West Side. For more information, call 888-377-4455.

BOOK CURRENTS

More of Venice

In his forthcoming history, **VENICE: LION CITY** (Simon & Schuster), Garry Wills passes over the picturesque decay of the Baroque city in search of "an older, tougher town." The might of early Venice was founded on the sea. The city's lagoon made Venice rich in salt, a valuable commodity; placed it in the middle of crucial trade routes; and also provided a testing ground for the increasingly long-range warships produced in its arsenal.

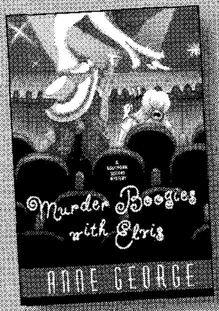


LAURENT CILLUFFO

Yet surprisingly few details are known about the boats of medieval Venice. According to Lillian Ray Martin's **THE ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY OF VENETIAN SHIPS AND BOATS** (Texas A&M/Chatham), only three shipwrecks have been fully excavated in the region. To supplement the sparse data from these vessels, Martin has studied almost all the surviving depictions of boats in Venetian art. This makes for some appealingly practical art criticism. Where Ruskin in **THE STONES OF VENICE** (Da Capo) looked at San Marco and discerned a "treasure heap . . . ceiled with fair mosaic," Martin looks at one mosaic, "The Miraculous Draught of Fishes," and observes, "The enlarged figures make the boat appear dangerously overloaded."

By the eighteen-sixties, when William Dean Howells was the American consul in Venice and writing **VENETIAN LIFE** (Marlboro Northwestern), the boats, especially the gondolas, had already become part of the city's tourist industry. He finds, however, that "the gondoliers are not the gondoliers of imaginative literature." He enjoys their almost incomprehensible repartee and is amused by their lack of interest in Venetian history and their trickery "so good-natured and simple that it can hardly offend." But "as for the singing of the gondoliers, they are the only class of Venetian who have not good voices."

—*Leo Carey*


Murder Boogies with Elvis
ANNE GEORGE

GRANDMOTHERS

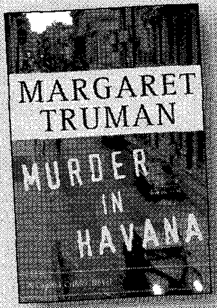
Mary Alice and Patricia Anne stumble across a mystery in the guise of Elvis Presley...literally. When a faux King falls dead at a benefit, the grandma gumshoes strap on some orthopedic blue suede shoes to catch the killer.

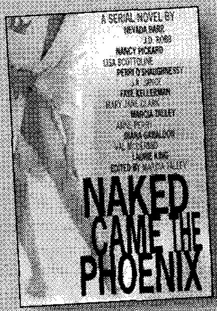
MURDER BOOGIES WITH ELVIS
by Anne George
Pub. Price: $23.00
Our Price: $18.40
Readers' Advantage Price: $16.56

GRACIAS

Retired CIA operative Max Pauling is drawn back into the intrigue game with a freelance case involving an American company illegally doing business in Cuba. He is quickly entangled in the politics, conspiracy and romance that is Havana.

MURDER IN HAVANA
by Margaret Truman
Pub. Price: $24.95
Our Price: $19.96
Readers' Advantage Price: $17.96


MARGARET TRUMAN
MURDER IN HAVANA


A SERIAL NOVEL BY
NAKED CAME THE PHOENIX

GALS

Thirteen of today's most popular female crime novelists collaborate on one thrilling mystery. The flamboyant owner of a Blue Ridge Mountain spa has been found murdered and the rich and pampered guests find themselves under suspicion.

NAKED CAME THE PHOENIX
edited by Marcia Talley
Pub. Price: $24.95
Our Price: $19.96
Readers' Advantage Price: $17.96

GUTTER

A woman known simply as Mad Annie is found dead in a West London gutter. Despite all indications to the contrary, the woman who finds her is so convinced she was murdered that she spends two decades uncovering the surprising truth.

THE SHAPE OF SNAKES
by Minette Walters
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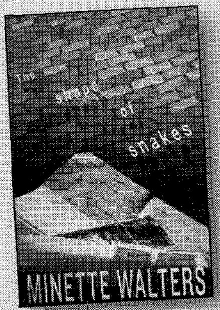
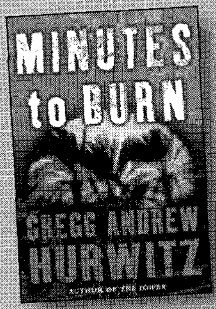

The shape of snakes
MINETTE WALTERS


MINUTES to BURN
GREGG ANDREW HURWITZ
AUTHOR OF THE TOWER

GALAPAGOS

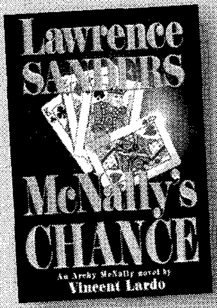
It's 2007. With next to no ozone layer, Earth reels from hurricanes, tremors and the scalding sun. A squad of Navy SEALs accompanies scientists to a Galapagos island to remedy the situation and uncover an evolutionary mystery.

MINUTES TO BURN
by Gregg Andrew Hurwitz
Pub. Price: $25.00
Our Price: $20.00
Readers' Advantage Price: $18.00

GENES

Palm Beach man-about-crime Archy McNally returns in the case of a missing daughter, a promiscuous mother and a whole lot of potential fathers. When Mom turns up dead, McNally must deduce who benefits most from her silence.

MCNALLY'S CHANCE
by Vincent Lardo
Pub. Price: $24.95
Our Price: $19.96
Readers' Advantage Price: $17.96


Lawrence SANDERS
McNally's CHANCE
An Archy McNally novel by
Vincent Lardo

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MOVIES OPENING

APOCALYPSE NOW REDUX
Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. Opening Aug. 3.

CURE
The American première of Kiyoshi Kurosawa's 1997 philosophical crime film, about a murder suspect who demonstrates hypnotic powers. With Koji Yakusho and Masato Hagiwara. In Japanese. Opening Aug. 3. (The Screening Room.)

ORIGINAL SIN
A romantic drama with Angelina Jolie and Antonio Banderas set in Cuba. Michael Cristofer directed. Opening Aug. 3.

THE PRINCESS DIARIES
Garry Marshall directed this comedy about a teen-age girl (Anne Hathaway) who discovers that she's the princess of a small European country. With Julie Andrews. Opening Aug. 3.

RUSH HOUR 2
A sequel to the 1998 comedy hit, with Chris Tucker and Jackie Chan returning in their roles as a crime-fighting duo. Brett Ratner directed. Opening Aug. 3.

THOMAS IN LOVE
The story of a thirty-two-year-old agoraphobic (Benoît Verhaert) who begins a cybersex relationship. Directed by Pierre-Paul Renders. In French. Opening Aug. 3.

UNDER THE SUN
A lonely farmer places an ad for help around the house which is answered by a well-heeled city woman in a comedy directed by Colin Nutley. In Swedish. Opening Aug. 3.

FILM NOTES

A.I.
An extraordinarily accomplished failure. After dithering with this project for years, Stanley Kubrick bequeathed it to Steven Spielberg, who wrote his own screenplay after Kubrick's death. In the bleak world that remains after the polar ice cap has melted, David (Haley Joel Osment), a perfect-child robot programmed to love, so disturbs his neurotic mother (Frances O'Connor) that she turns him loose in the woods. There he hooks up with a friendly stud-gigolo robot (Jude Law, who is certainly more beautiful than anything human). At that point, the movie should have taken off as the story of a science-fiction Pinocchio—a toy who wants to be human—but despite many uncanny moments and some extraordinary visual invention, "A.I.," which appears to celebrate the end of human existence, leaves one in a depressed stupor.—*David Denby* (Reviewed in our issue of 7/2/01.) (Battery Park 16, Coronet Cinema, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII.)

AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS
Though set in the present, this movie-industry farce, written by Billy Crystal and Peter Tolan and directed by Joe Roth, comes off as a lamely nostalgic attempt at screwball comedy. It's puckish and remote: the filmmakers, lacking the heart to confront the Hollywood of today, never achieve any kind of vital satirical tone. John Cusack and Catherine Zeta-Jones play a married couple who have starred in picture after picture together but have fallen out of love. Julia Roberts is a Cinderella figure who loses weight and blooms after years of servitude. As ersatz as the role is, Roberts fires up that smile and becomes the best thing in the movie.—*D.D.* (7/30/01) (Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema 1 and 2, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, and Union Square.)

BEN-HUR
This is the 1925 Ramon Novarro and Francis X. Bushman version; it was a remake even then, but M-G-M put five million dollars into it, and so much Amazing Gargantuan, Stupendous, and Mighty Biblical Pageantry that vast numbers of viewers were swept off their feet. There's the galley manned by a thousand slaves, the sea battle between Romans and ancient pirates, the Valley of the Lepers, and the chariot race staged in a mammoth stadium, with every L.A. man, woman, and child lying about as a super. Directed by Fred Niblo.—*Pauline Kael* (Museum of Television & Radio; Aug. 3-5.)

BOB LE FLAMBEUR
This 1955 oddball caper movie, set largely in Montmartre, begins like a conventional essay on cops, crooks, and the molls who cause dishonor among thieves. A down-on-his-luck gambler (the suave, world-weary Roger Duchesne), preparing to rob the Deauville casino, is placed at risk by the flapping mouths of his partners and their women. The director, Jean-Pierre Melville (who changed his last name from Grumbach after reading "Moby-Dick"), puts a saturnine twist on the action. And the cinematographer, Henri Decaë, working in black-and-white, goes from the subtle gray hues of dawn and twilight to gutter chiaroscuro, giving each camera movement a lovely shape. The movie is slight, even silly, but charming in its preening masculine way. In French.—*Michael Sragow* (Film Forum; Aug. 1-8.)

BREAD AND TULIPS
Left behind by a tour bus, a bored Italian housewife (Licia Maglietta) refuses to go home to her selfish family and instead takes off for Venice, where she meets a variety of charming eccentrics, including a doleful, courtly waiter from Iceland (Bruno Ganz), who makes ponderous remarks and recites epic poetry. Whimsical and, except for Maglietta's lovely performance, unremarkable. Directed by Silvio Soldini. In Italian.—*D.D.* (Paris.)

BULLY
Larry Clark's new movie is based on events that took place near Fort Lauderdale in 1993, when a group of bored, disaffected teens plotted the murder of an abusive older boy. Clark doesn't bother with the kind of square sociological "understanding" which made fifties juvenile-delinquent movies so lugubrious; he gets in bed with the teen-agers and stays there, re-creating the brainless fantasies, the erotic and druggy stupor, the sheer ignorance of kids who don't know that anything outside their desires exists. The movie is pitiless and derisive—closer, at its best, to hip black comedy than to tragedy. But Clark is something of a scoundrel: the mangy haplessness of dumb teen-agers is exactly what eroticizes them for him, and he doesn't, for all his intimate contact, tell us why violence is the only way out for them. A fascinating but enraging movie. With Nick Stahl, Brad Renfro, and Rachel Miner.—*D.D.* (7/30/01) (Angelika Film Center.)

CATS & DOGS
Small children should enjoy Lawrence Guterman's homely fantasy, with its mixture of low, sniffing humor and high-tech effects. Jeff Goldblum and Elizabeth Perkins, who surely can't need the money that badly, play a couple who lose their pooch and replace it with a beagle. Like most beagles, this one is a first-time secret agent sent to foil a worldwide conspiracy of cats. The plot is Chihuahua-light, and there are many scenes that should have been scooped and thrown away. The animals perform in contorted live-action, with the voices of Tobey Maguire, Susan Sarandon, and others issuing uncomfortably from canine lips. How can one movie be both cute and unutterably charmless?—*Anthony Lane* (7/9/01) (Battery Park 16, Chelsea West, East 85th Street, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 64th and 2nd, and Union Square.)

GHOST WORLD
Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. (Angelika Film Center, Kips Bay Theatre, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

HEDWIG AND THE ANGRY INCH
Trash perfection. Flamboyant costumes, lollipop colors, and glam-rock music come together explosively in John Cameron Mitchell's movie adaptation of his Off Broadway hit. Hedwig, a transsexual rocker, tours the dives of America in pursuit of her gorgeous, successful former protégé (Michael Pitt). Her band is called the Angry Inch (which also refers to the result of a botched sex-change operation), and her story unwinds in a series of monologues and rocking stage performances. Mitchell's confident, nonpandering direction brings out cheeky performances from his actors, and songwriter Stephen Trask's tunes, worthy of Bowie at his gender-bending best, wrap the film in loving, outré fashion.—*Bruce Diones* (Chelsea Cinemas, Cinema II, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Union Square.)

JURASSIC PARK III
A further rematch of *Homo sapiens* versus the velociraptor, with honors fairly even by the end. The raptor has longer teeth and, we now learn, more refined social skills, but man has the satellite phone. After an absence of one movie, Dr. Alan Grant (Sam Neill) returns to a dino-packed island with a bullish assistant (Alessandro Nivola) and a couple of lily-livered adventurers (William H. Macy and Téa Leoni). The result, directed not by Steven Spielberg but by Joe Johnston, is the most streamlined installment of the franchise so far. For your money, you get no ethics lectures, not much science, and a handful of half-baked characters; everything is set, in other words, for a spirited game of chase-and-chew. Isn't that why you bought a ticket in the first place? In English and Raptorspeak, though sadly without subtitles.—*A.L.* (7/23/01) (Battery Park 16, 84th Street Sixplex, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, New York Twin, 19th Street East 6, Olympia I and II, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII.)

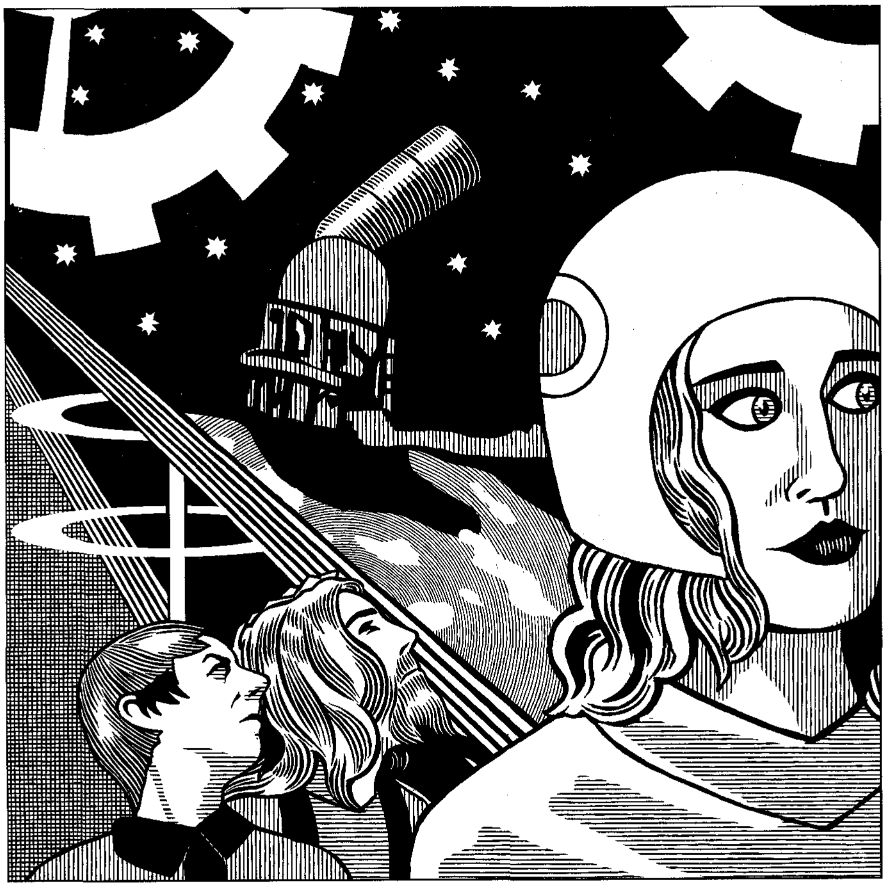
KISS OF THE DRAGON
The tiny, mild-looking Jet Li, playing a Chinese secret agent, shows up in Paris and joins a team of rogue French cops led by Tchécky Karyo, who rushes about like a madman, screaming profanities in English. Gone are the balletic wonders of the Hong Kong cinema. Westernizing the genre, Luc Besson (who wrote and produced; the film was directed by Chris Nahon) shoots up the lobby of the Ritz and destroys an innocent *bateau-mouche* cruising the Seine. Jet Li is fun to watch, but in a series of absurdly bloody battles he winds up killing most of the Paris police.—*D.D.* (Battery Park 16, Chelsea West, Empire 25, Murray Hill Cinemas, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, and Village East Cinemas.)

LEGALLY BLONDE
The fabulous Elle Woods (Reese Witherspoon), a West Coast sorority queen, follows her escaping boyfriend to Harvard Law School, where she shows up wearing leather and carrying a Chihuahua in her arms. The first-time director Robert Luketic displays a talent for candied artifice and gentle parody, but "Legally Blonde" collapses very quickly into low-grade farce. Almost everyone at Harvard is a jerk or a phony, and the plot, including a murder trial, is sitcom-obvious. See it only for the talented Witherspoon, who manages to embody the Cosmo girl, Lancômed to the hilt.—*D.D.* (7/16/01) (Battery Park 16, Chelsea West, East 86th Street Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Union Square, and Waverly.)

LUMUMBA
Raoul Peck tells the story of the African freedom fighter Patrice Lumumba with fire and grace. The opening scene sets the vérité tone with the sound of a saw cutting through bone; two Belgian soldiers are breaking down Lumumba's body and incinerating it in a ten-gallon drum. From there, the film backtracks to the origins of the Congolese independence movement and proceeds to explain how a man's legacy could be so threatening. Peck handles all of this, including the atrocities, with refinement, and lets the drama of Lumumba's story run smoothly, free of heavy historical detail. Eriq Ebouaney is extraordi-

nary in the lead role, the production feels emotionally true, and the speeches generate spontaneous applause. In French and Lingala.—*Michael Agger* (BAM Rose Cinemas and Film Forum.)

MADE
Jon Favreau and Vince Vaughn reprise their Mutt-and-Jeff act from "Swingers," but this time in a context uncertainly derived from Martin Scorsese's "Mean Streets." A nasty Los Angeles crime boss (Peter Falk) sends the two men—amateurs as criminals—to New York to do a job. The heavyset Favreau is morose and fearful and just wants to come home in one piece; Vaughn, boastful, unreliable, and stupid, has the time of his life. Favreau, who wrote and directed, veers back and forth between comedy and a more serious tone, and the movie winds up suspended in the air. The two actors try to pull the entire story out of their friendship with each other, but the psychological underpinnings are missing: we never really understand what holds this odd couple together. With Sean (Puffy) Combs, viciously incisive as a downtown Manhattan gangster.—*D.D.* (42nd Street E Walk, Lincoln Square, and Union Square.)



NORDIC NETHERWORLDS *Winnipeg native Guy Maddin's trippy films are a movie lover's dream (sometimes literally), photographed in the surreal style of early silent features. Two of his best dark fairy tales—"Careful" and "Tales from the Gimli Hospital"—will be shown at BAM starting August 7, along with his masterly five-minute short, "Heart of the World," a melodrama that combines elements of archaic horror films and propaganda reels, science-fiction imagery, and a passion play.*

MICHAEL KUPPERMAN

PLANET OF THE APES
Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. (Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Olympia I and II, 62nd and Broadway, Union Square, and Ziegfeld.)

THE SCORE
An intelligent and rather overcivilized caper movie which features three generations of great male actors: Marlon Brando (sounding like his long-ago nemesis Truman Capote) as an upper-class aesthete and fence with exquisite manners, Robert De Niro as a saturnine jazz-club owner and safecracker who never takes risks, and Edward Norton as a brilliant but willful young con man and criminal. The acting is so relaxed and skillful that one can enjoy the smooth precision as a virtue in itself. Unfortunately, the writers and the director, Frank Oz, worked out the plot without working out how the audience should feel about anything that happens. Emotionally the movie is neutered, and Oz seems to have trouble deciding whether he's making a thriller or another version of his double-cross comedy "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels."—*D.D.* (Battery Park 16, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema 1 and 2, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 72nd Street East, and Village Theatre VII.)

SEXY BEAST
A tale of expatriate Cockneys, dry-roasted by the Spanish sun and determined to get England off their backs. Gal (Ray Winstone), once a crook, and his wife, Deedee (Amanda Redman), once a porno star, have retired to the Costa del Sol; now they are tracked down by an old acquaintance, Don (Ben Kingsley), who invites Gal back home for one last crime. Jonathan Glazer, the young British director making his début feature, turns the first half of the picture into a cool study of hotheads, saturated with creative cursing; the second half, which finds Gal returning to London, stumbles and slides into the grim traditions of gangsterland. But the movie needs to be seen for its clean compositions, its sure touch of fantasy, and, above all, for the forbidding presence of Kingsley—the prince of darkness, lightly disguised as a human being.—*A.L.* (6/18 & 25/01) (Battery Park 16, Empire 25, 59th Street East Cinema, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Union Square.)

SHADOW OF A DOUBT
The setting is quiet, clean, sleepy Santa Rosa, California; it is invaded by a psychopathic killer (Joseph Cotten), who comes to visit his unsuspecting and adoring relatives. Alfred Hitchcock considered this 1942 thriller (from a script principally by Thornton Wilder) to be his best American film, and he may have been right, in terms of character and its sustained grip, but it certainly isn't as much fun as several others.—*P.K.* (American Museum of the Moving Image; Aug. 4.)

VICTIM
This pioneering 1961 attempt to create public sympathy for homosexuals and to publicize the English laws that put them in jeopardy is ingenious, moralistic, and moderately amusing. Structurally, it's a slick thriller about a blackmail ring. There's a terribly self-conscious attempt to distinguish between the "love" that the barrister hero (Dirk Bogarde) feels for his wife (Sylvia Sims) and the physical desire—presumably a lower order of emotion—that he once felt for a young man (Peter McEnery), who appears to be more interesting in every way than the wife. The plot requires the barrister to sacrifice his career—to confess his own homosexuality—in order to trap the blackmailers.—*P.K.* (Walter Reade Theatre; Aug. 3 and Aug. 5.)

WET HOT AMERICAN SUMMER
Michael Showalter and David Wain of the sketch-comedy group the State wrote and directed this hilarious coming-of-age marathon set at Camp Firewood, Maine, in August, 1981—a time when pulled-up white socks could be worn safely. What's impressive here is the pace; by cramming an entire summer of pranks, hookups, defeats, and comebacks into a single day, Wain and Showalter keep the jokes zipping along. Janeane Garofalo, David Hyde Pierce, Paul Rudd, Molly Shannon, and the other actors ham it up for laughs with a raunchiness tempered by deadpan earnestness. Best are the throwaway moments, such as when a Kenyan runner appears out of nowhere and sprints past everyone in capture the flag.—*M.A.* (Empire 25 and Village East Cinemas.)

ALSO PLAYING

BIG EDEN
Quad Cinema.
BROTHER
Angelika Film Center, BAM Rose Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, and Park & 86th Street Cinemas.
THE CLOSET
Angelika Film Center, BAM Rose Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, Cinema I, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, and Kips Bay Theatre.
DIVIDED WE FALL
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.
DOWNTOWN 81
The Screening Room.
GREENFINGERS
First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Village Theatre VII.
JACKPOT
Angelika Film Center, Eastside Playhouse, and Empire 25.
THE RIVER
Cinema Village.
SHREK (5/21/01)
East 86th Street Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Sutton 1 and 2, and Village East Cinemas.
STARTUP.COM (5/14/01)
Village East Cinemas.
THAT OBSCURE OBJECT OF DESIRE
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

Unless noted, call 777-FILM for show times.

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway.
BAM Rose Cinemas, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn.

Battery Park 16, West St. at Vesey St. (945-3418).
Beekman, Second Ave. at 66th St.
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.
Chelsea West, 333 W. 23rd St.
Cinema I, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema II, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema 3rd Avenue, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St. (924-3363).
Coronet Cinemas, Third Ave. at 59th St.
East 85th Street, First Ave. at 85th St.
East 86th Street Cinemas, Third Ave. at 86th St.
84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
Empire 25, on 42nd St. near Eighth Ave. (398-3939).
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
Film Forum, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
42nd Street E Walk, 42nd St. near Eighth Ave.
Kips Bay Theatre, Second Ave. at 32nd St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St.
Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.
Metro Cinema 1 and 2, Broadway at 99th St.
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th St.
New York Twin, Second Ave. at 67th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.
Olympia I and II, Broadway at 107th St.
Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Paris, 4 W. 58th St. (688-3800).
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Pioneer, 155 E. 3rd St. (254-3300).
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
The Screening Room, 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.
64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
State, Broadway at 45th St.
Sutton 1 and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
Union Square, Broadway at 13th St.
Village East Cinemas, Second Ave. at 12th St.
Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center (875-5600).
Waverly 1 and 2, Sixth Ave. at 3rd St.
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE
35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—Wednesdays, starting at dusk: Free outdoor movies at the Socrates Sculpture Park (Broadway at Vernon Blvd.), in Queens. The feature on Aug. 1 is "A Jumpin' Night in the Garden of Eden" (1987, Michal Goldman). ♦ Through Sept. 9: "Hollywood on the Home Front: American Film in the 1940's." Aug. 4 at 2: "Shadow of a Doubt" (†). ♦ Aug. 4 at 4:15 "Kings Row" (1940, Sam Wood). ♦ Aug. 5 at 2: "The Blue Dahlia" (1946, George Marshall). ♦ Aug. 5 at 4: "The Lost Weekend" (1945, Billy Wilder). ♦ Repertory night. Aug. 4-5 at 6:30: "Fireworks" (1997, Takeshi Kitano; in Japanese).

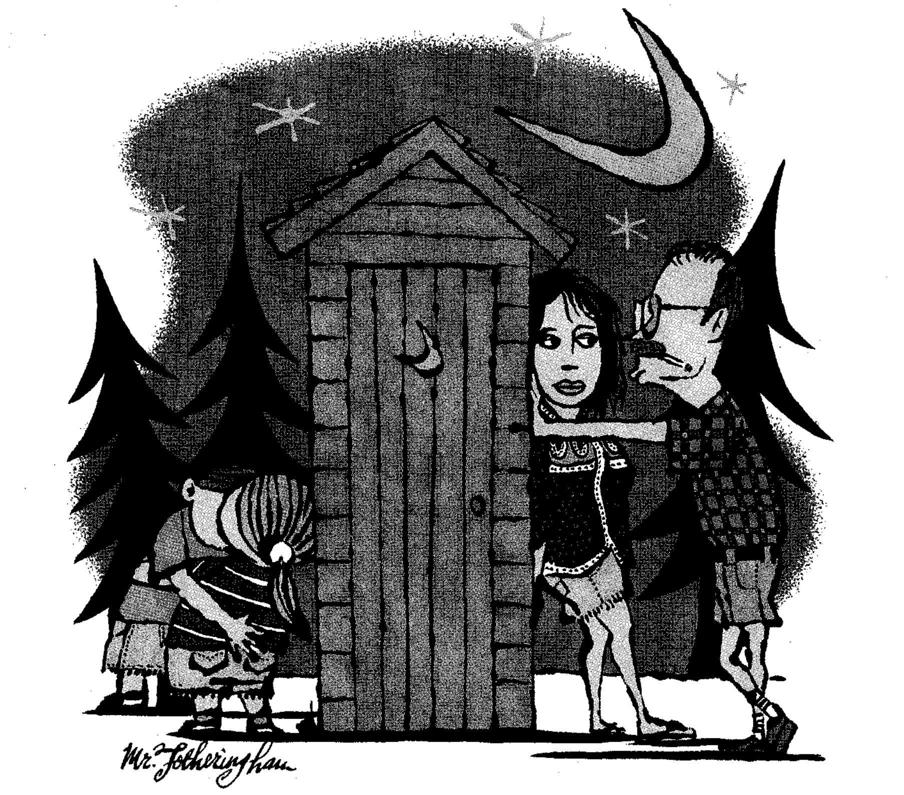
ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES
32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110)—Through Aug. 16: "Good Times, Bad Times: The Films of Abel Ferrara." Aug. 1 at 7: "Body Snatchers" (1993). ♦ Aug. 1 at 9: "Dangerous Game" (1993). ♦ Aug. 2 at 7: "The Addiction" (1995). ♦ Aug. 2 at 9: "The Funeral" (1996). ♦ Aug. 3 at 7: "New Rose Hotel" (1998). ♦ Aug. 3 at 9 and 11:30; Aug. 4 at 2:30, 4:45, 7, 9:45, and 11:30; Aug. 5 at 2:30, 4:45, 7, and 9:45; and Aug. 6-8 at 7 and 9:15: The première of an unreleased 1997 film, "The Blackout," with Matthew Modine, Dennis Hopper, and Beatrice Dalle.

BAM ROSE CINEMAS
30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (777-3456)—Aug. 1-2 at 6:50 and 9:10: "The World According to Shorts," two programs of award-winning short films. ♦ Through Aug. 31: Seven decades of cinema from Portugal. All films are in Portuguese. Aug. 3 at 4:30 and 7:10: "Aniki Bóbó" (1942, Manoel de Oliveira), "Working the River Douro" (1931, de Oliveira), and "The Artist and the City" (1957, de Oliveira). ♦ Aug. 3 at 9:30: "Jaime" (1974, Antonio Reis). ♦ Aug. 4 at 2, 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Bones" (1997, Pedro Costa). ♦ Aug. 5 at 2, 4:30, and 9:10: "The Mutants" (1998, Teresa Villaverede). ♦ Aug. 5 at 6:50: "Maria from the Sea" (1930, José Leitão de Barros), with live piano accompaniment by Donald Sosin. ♦ Aug. 8 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Glória" (1999, Manuela Viegas). ♦ The films of Gregg Araki. Aug. 6 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:30: "Doom Generation" (1995). ♦ Through Aug. 28: A tribute to the director Guy Maddin. Aug. 7 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Heart of the World" (2000) and "Twilight of the Ice Nymphs" (1997). ♦ Aug. 7 at 8:30: An outdoor screening of Spike Lee's "Crooklyn" (1994) in Fort Greene Park.

BRYANT PARK
Sixth Ave. at 42nd St.—Mondays, starting at dusk: Free drive-in-style moviegoing. The feature on Aug. 6 is "The Philadelphia Story" (1940, George Cukor).

CINEMA CLASSICS
332 E. 11th St. (677-5368)—Through Aug. 31: French films. Aug. 1 at 8 and 10:05: "I Can't Sleep" (1995, Claire Denis). ♦ Aug. 2-3 at 8 and 10 and Aug. 4 at 6, 8, and 10: "Chocolat" (1988, Denis). ♦ Aug. 5 at 5, 7:15, and 9:30 and Aug. 6-7 at 8 and 10:15: "Summer" (1986, Eric Rohmer).

FILM FORUM
W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—Through Aug. 9 at 1:40, 3:50, 6, 8:10, and 10:10: "Bob Le Flambeur" (†).



Janeane Garofalo and David Hyde Pierce in "Wet Hot American Summer."

FLORENCE GOULD HALL
55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—Through Aug. 14: "Women Behind the Camera." All films are in French. Aug. 7 at 12:30 and 6:30: "Battle Cries" (1999, Solveig Anspach). ♦ Aug. 7 at 3:30 and 9: "La Bûche" (1999, Danièle Thompson).

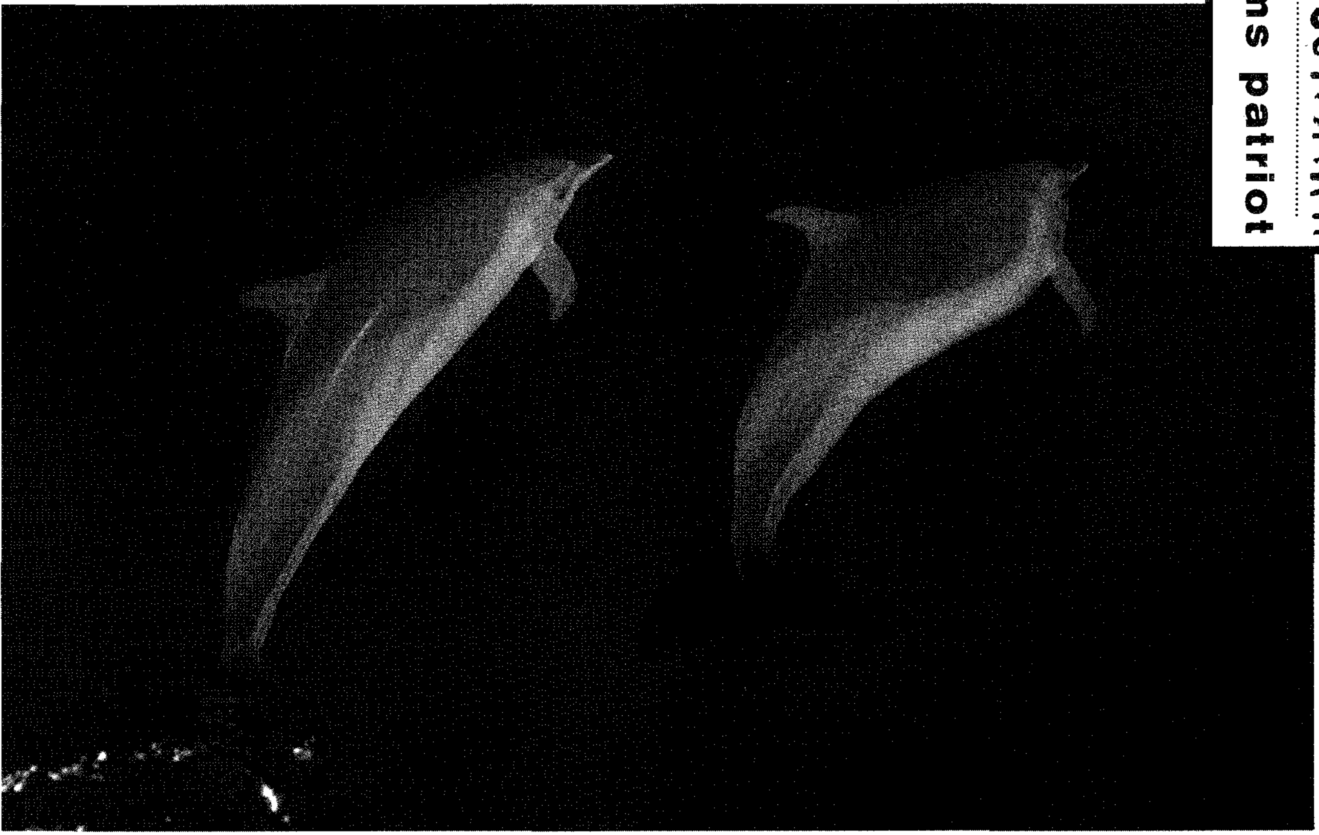
MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—Through Aug. 2: "Erotic Tales." Aug. 2 at 3:30: "Can I Be Your Bratwurst, Please?" (1999, Rosa von Praunheim), "Georgian Grapes" (1999, Georgi Shengelaya; in Georgian), and "The Red Garter" (1999, Markus Fischer; in German). ♦ Aug. 2 at 6: "Sweeties" (1995, Cinzia Th. Torrini; in Italian), "Hotel Paradise" (1995, Nicolas Roeg), and "Devilish Education" (1995, Janusz Majewski; in Polish). ♦ Through Sept 7: A retrospective of the cinematography of James Wong Howe (1899-1976). Aug. 3 at 3:30: "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer" (1938, Norman Taurog). ♦ Aug. 3 at 6: "Transatlantic" (1931, William K. Howard). ♦ Aug. 3 at 8 and Aug. 6 at 6: "The Power and the Glory" (1933, Howard). ♦ Aug. 4 at 2: "Peter Pan" (1924, Herbert Brenon). ♦ Aug. 4 at 5 and Aug. 6 at 3:30: "The King on Main Street" (1925, Monta Bell). ♦ Aug. 5 at 2 and Aug. 7 at 6: "Algiers" (1938, John Cromwell). ♦ Aug. 5 at 5 and Aug. 7 at 3:30: "The Prisoner of Zenda" (1937, Cromwell).

THE MUSEUM OF TELEVISION & RADIO
25 W. 52nd St. (621-6800)—Through Sept. 16: "Hello, Goodbye," screenings of pilots, premières, and final episodes of classic television shows. Thursdays through Sundays at 3. ♦ Restored silent films with full orchestration. Aug. 3 at 6 and Aug. 4-5 at 2: "Ben-Hur" (†).

THE SCREENING ROOM
54 Varick St. (334-2100)—Through Aug. 2: The films of Kiyoshi Kurosawa. All films are in Japanese. Aug. 1 at 4, 6, 8, and 10: "Charisma" (1999). ♦ Aug. 2 at 4:10, 6:10, and 10:10: "Séance" (2000). ♦ Aug. 2 at 8:10: "Pulse" (2001).

WALTER READE THEATRE
Lincoln Center (875-5600)—Through Aug. 9: "Dirk Bogarde: Gentleman in the Shadows." Aug. 1 at 4 and 8: "Cast a Dark Shadow" (1948, Lewis Gilbert). ♦ Aug. 1 at 6 and 9:45: "Damn the Defiant!" (1962, Gilbert). ♦ Aug. 2 at 4 and 8 and Aug. 6 at 6: "So Long at the Fair" (1950, Terence Fisher and Anthony Danborough). ♦ Aug. 2 at 6 and 10 and Aug. 6 at 9:45: "The Hunted" (1952, Charles Crichton). ♦ Aug. 3 at 4 and 8:30 and Aug. 8 at 4:30: "Darling" (1965, John Schlesinger). ♦ Aug. 3 at 6:30 and Aug. 5 at 3: "Victim" (†). ♦ Aug. 4 at 3 and 8: "Death in Venice" (1971, Luchino Visconti; in English and Italian). ♦ Aug. 4 at 5:30 and Aug. 5 at 7:30: "Despair" (1978, Rainer Werner Fassbinder). ♦ Aug. 5 at 5:15 and Aug. 7 at 4: "The Night Porter" (1973, Liliana Cavani; in English and Italian). ♦ Aug. 6 at 4 and 7:50 and Aug. 7 at 6:30: "Doctor in the House" (1954, Ralph Thomas). ♦ Aug. 7 at 8:30: "The Spanish Gardener" (1956, Philip Leacock).

EDWIN FOTHERINGHAM



Brandon D. Cole/CORBIS

DOLPHIN SPOTTING

While on the Big Island of Hawaii, snorkle along the rocky coast of Keauhou Bay and navigate lava tubes and sea caves. If you're lucky, you may spot flying fish, sea turtles, and dolphins.

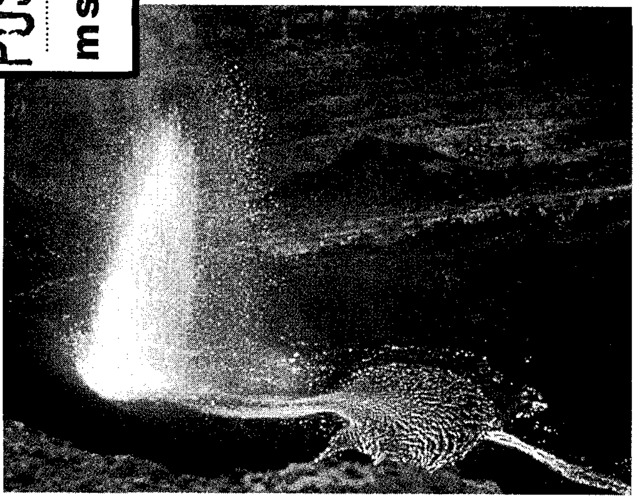
hawaii like a local

BY RICHARD J. PIETSCHMANN

You've probably never seen the sun rise the way I have. I was at a dormant volcano named Haleakala on the island of Maui, and as I stood in the pre-dawn chill, gaping at the stark moonscape of a crater so vast that Manhattan island could fit snugly inside, the sun suddenly stormed over the opposite rim and the huge bowl before me ignited in a supernova explosion of orange and gold.

It wasn't the only experience that literally took my breath away during a cruise to five ports on four Hawaiian islands aboard the 1,212-passenger *ms Patriot*. The new flagship of United States Lines, which began sailing year-round to Oahu, Kauai, Maui, and the Big Island of Hawaii last December, offers passengers more than eighty shore excursions of varying length and activity levels from scenic motorcoach tours that require little walking to some of the most exciting, vigorous adventures ever packaged by a cruise line. Called E Hoʻaʻano (Hawaiian for "to accept a challenge") these active treks include a wilderness hike exploring a remote ridge line in the West Maui Mountains and plumbing the wonders of Kilauea volcano.

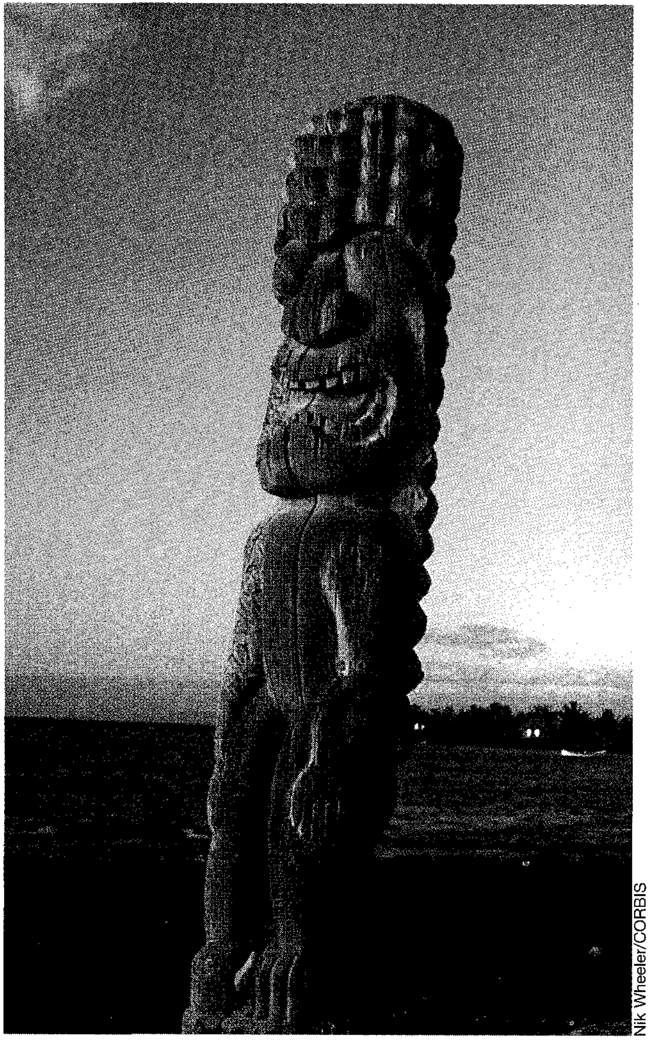
"We want to offer Hawaii the way it would be seen by locals," said Lei Fountain, who's in charge of the line's tour program. "Other cruise ships have casinos, but we're a destination-oriented cruise company, and what better destination is there but Hawaii?"



courtesy of United States Lines

LAVA AND LUAUS

Above: Inside the four-hundred-foot deep Kilauea Caldera is Halema‘uma‘u, an active crater still hissing and spewing lava. Below: A traditional totem pole stands guard on the Big Island.



Nik Wheeler/CORBIS

I soon learned what Lei meant. In impossibly lush, rugged Kauai, I swooped in a six-passenger helicopter into Waimea Canyon, the ten-mile-long, 3,400-foot-deep gulch that Mark Twain called "the Grand Canyon of the Pacific." Soon I found myself marveling at the precipitous sea cliffs of Na Pali that plunge more than a thousand feet into the ocean. Then we hovered like a great aluminum hummingbird near a veiling waterfall under the summit of Mt. Wai‘ale‘ale, one of the hardest to reach spots on earth. In a single forty-five-minute flight (one that's routinely called the best seated adventure on the planet), I had seen three of the most remarkable sights imaginable.

The *Patriot* stops at two Big Island ports, and the day in Hilo gave us easy access to Kilauea, the world's only "drive-in" volcano. As Hawaiians tell it, Kilauea is the handiwork of Pele, the goddess of fire. First we stopped at what's left of the village of Kalapana near the coast, overrun by a lava flow within the past twenty years. I took a short ten-minute walk to gaze at my first black sand beach. But it was up around the four-thousand-foot level at the otherworldly concavity of Kilauea Caldera, that I comprehended what volcanic fury truly meant. Four-hundred-feet deep, and two and a half miles across at its widest point, the Caldera is filled with hardened lava from cataclysmic earlier eruptions. Within the Caldera, is hissing and steaming Halema‘uma‘u Crater, a glimpse of an eruption less than three decades old. A stop at the visitor's center helped explain what we were looking at, but it's only when you enter a lava tube or get a whiff of the sulphur fumes escaping from fissures in hardened lava that you really begin to grasp the raw power of the relentless geologic process that has built the Hawaiian islands from the bottom of the sea.

Kona, on the other side of the island, is the ship's primary water sports port because of its clear water and rocky coast pocked with small bays and little coves. Though it was tough to do, I passed on the catamaran sail that was taking passengers snorkeling in Kealakekua Bay, one of the best places in Hawaii to view fish and coral. Instead, I hopped in a two-person kayak and shoved off from Keauhou Bay. We paddled alongside the rocky coast, popping into lava tubes and sea caves. We spotted spinner dolphins and flying fish before gliding into a cove to snorkel and swim.

Far less strenuous but every bit as much fun was the *Patriot's* Maui luau. As we arrived to the soft strains of Polynesian music, fresh orchid leis were placed around our necks. The feast was held on a slope above a beckoning beach. We were entertained by hulas from both Tahiti and Hawaii, and while sating ourselves with kalua pork, gooey purple poi, taro rolls, and the coconut pudding that Hawaiians call *haupia,* we learned the story of the early adventurers who first came to the Hawaiian Islands by outrigger canoes around 300 A.D.

When the day began to wane, I wandered down to the inviting beach to watch the sun sink into the sea. Looking back at the immense slope of Haleakala which rises nearly two miles above the sea, I realized I had seen the sun rise and fall the same day on Maui. Now, as if tamed by its journey through the sky, the sun slipped sedately out of sight behind docile, lapping waves.

(Los Angeles-based Richard J. Pietschmann has contributed to Departures, Travel + Leisure, *and* Bon Appétit.*)*

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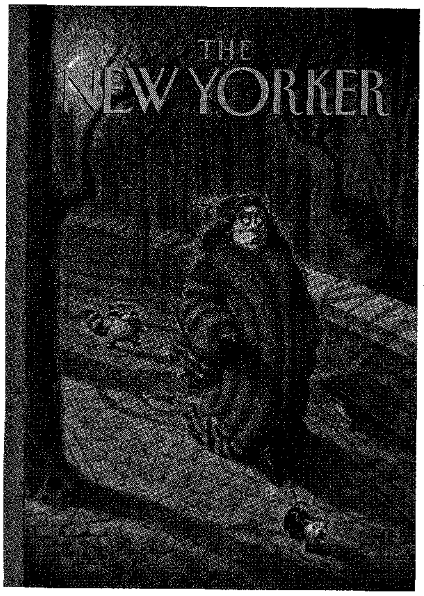

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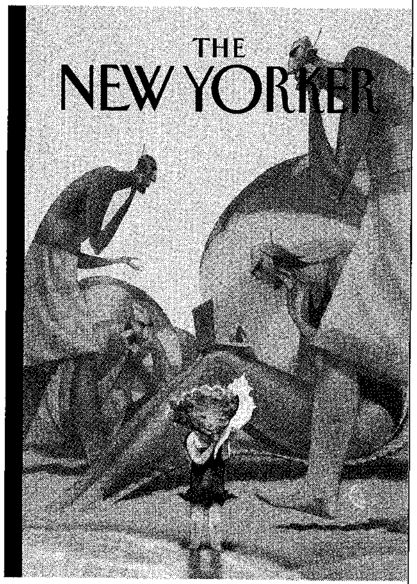

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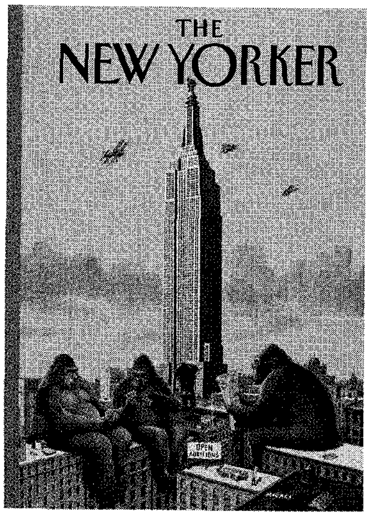

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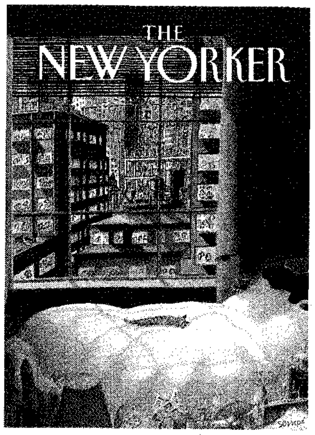

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THE
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THE TALK OF THE TOWN

COMMENT
HARD CELLS

Last Monday, shortly before heading home from a trip to Europe, George W. Bush had a private audience with Pope John Paul II. Stem-cell research was apparently not discussed during the one-on-one between the Holy Father and the ex-prodigal son, but it did come up during a joint press appearance afterward. "Experience is already showing how a tragic coarsening of consciences accompanies the assault on innocent human life in the womb," the Pope said, and that led to "related evils such as euthanasia, infanticide and, most recently, proposals for the creation for research purposes of human embryos, destined to destruction in the process." This was no off-the-cowl remark. Some observers, seizing on the fact that almost none of the stem cells that are currently the subject of controversy are derived from embryos created "for research purposes" (they are derived from embryos created as a by-product of in-vitro fertilization), hoped wanly for a compromise.

President Bush, for his part, said nothing about stem cells with the Pope sitting beside him. But later in the day he allowed that the subject is one that "has got serious moral implications" and is the sort of thing about which "our nation must think carefully before we proceed." He added, "And, therefore, my process has been, frankly, unusually deliberative for my Administration."

Think first, and only then proceed: coming from an Administration that, frankly, prefers to do things the other way around (deploy missile defenses now, see if they work later; cut taxes now, figure out the budget later), this is indeed an unusual "process." A welcome one, too, considering that Bush's only thought during the election campaign was to toss a bone to the hardest core of the anti-abortion movement. His position at the time was a simple syllogism: from fertilization on, every embryo is a person; embryonic stem-cell research requires the destruction of embryos; therefore no embryonic stem-cell research. Since then, however, the country has begun to focus on the merits of the issue, and Congress on its politics. Hence the President's vaunted agonizing, which the White House has trumpeted as an exercise in moral philosophy.

The day Bush left for Europe, the National Institutes of Health published a remarkable report on stem-cell research, based largely on a review of more than twelve hundred scientific publications. Though the report is careful to say that it "does not make recommendations," its policy implications are not exactly obscure. Embryonic stem cells, it declared, are "capable of becoming almost all of the specialized cells of the body and, thus, may have the potential to generate replacement cells for a broad array of tissues and organs, such as the heart, the pancreas, and the nervous system." The diseases and syndromes for which embryonic stem-cell research holds out the promise of treatment or cure include diabetes, chronic heart disease, end-stage kidney disease, liver failure, cancer, Parkinson's, spinal-cord injury, multiple sclerosis, Alzheimer's, and birth defects—a stunning catalogue of human misery that, by itself, constitutes an argument that ought to be conclusive. The argument has already proved powerful enough to persuade several reliably anti-abortion senators, including Orrin Hatch and Strom Thurmond, to put aside, for the moment, their usual allegiances. In contrast, the "pro-life" rejoinder (in this case the inverted commas are fully warranted) is purely abstract

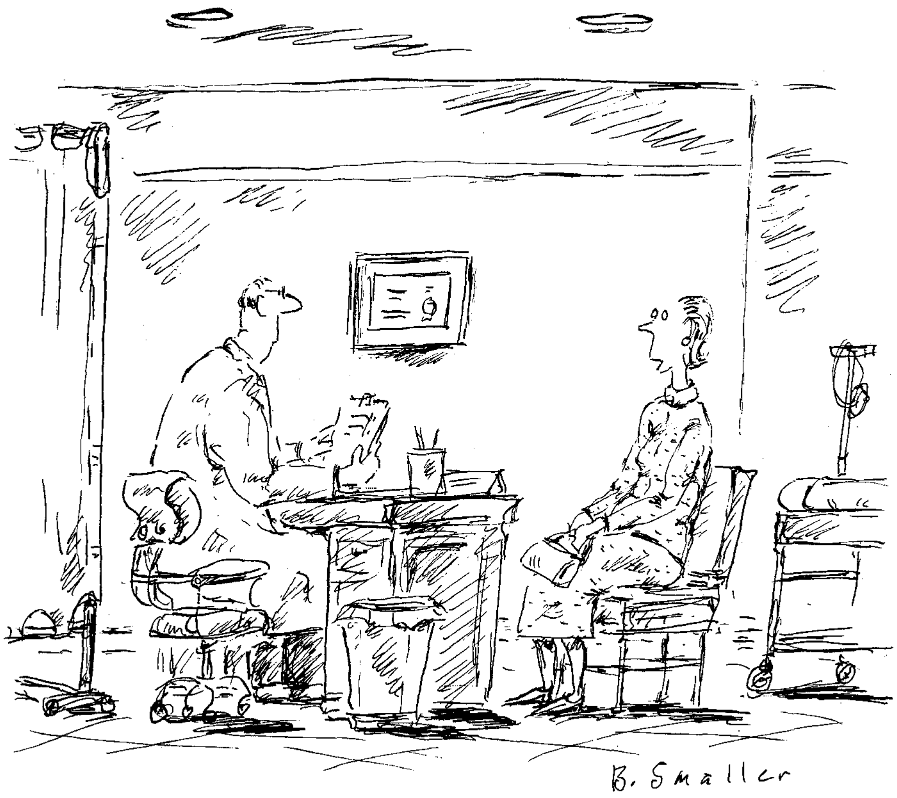
ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL

and essentially theological—and theology, once invested with the force of law or policy, becomes theocracy.

Stem cells for research are drawn from blastocysts—embryos that are a few days old, consist of several dozen cells, and are smaller by far than the pinhead on which theology's angels dance. Infertility clinics create and freeze such embryos in the thousands every year, and the vast majority—more than ninety per cent—are never implanted in a woman's womb. Whether these excess blastocysts are simply discarded, as the opponents of stem-cell research would apparently prefer, or whether a few hundred of them become the basis for a biomedical alchemy that could benefit millions, the amount of actual human suffering entailed would be the same: zero.

A month ago, three of the top Republican leaders in the House of Representatives—Dick Armey, Tom DeLay, and J. C. Watts—denounced embryonic stem-cell research as "life-destroying." "It is not pro-life to rely on an industry of death, even if the intention is to find cures for diseases," they declared. The industry they must have had in mind—the only one they could have been referring to—is in-vitro fertilization, the purpose of which is to bring children into the world. A couple of weeks later, a House subcommittee chaired by one of their allies held a packed hearing. The prize human exhibit was a pair of adorable nine-month-old twin boys. Their father held them up while their mother displayed a photograph of three tiny clumps of cells in a fertility-clinic petri dish—their sons as embryos, plus a third that didn't make it. "Which one of my children would you kill?" the father cried. "Which one would you take?" His listeners did not appear to notice that his indignation, however genuine, was misdirected. One of his "children"—the third clump of cells—had already been "taken," lost while the two others came to term. And, if this couple was typical of the customers of fertility clinics, then other blastocysts had been "taken," too. Evidently it is acceptable for embryos to be created and sacrificed if the intention is to make it possible for one or two others to develop into full-fledged human beings. But, if the beneficiaries are already full-fledged human beings, they're on their own.

—*Hendrik Hertzberg*



"I think the dosage needs adjusting. I'm not nearly as happy as the people in the ads."

THE STUMP
BLOOMBERG COURTS MAKOR

At Makor, the Jewish cultural center on the Upper West Side, you can study the kabbalah, take belly-dancing lessons, attend a discussion of "commitmentphobia," or—and this is one of Makor's semi-stated reasons for being—search for a suitable mate among the young Jewish men and women participating in such activities at its sleek headquarters, on Sixty-seventh Street. Or you can stump for votes. The other evening, Michael Bloomberg, the billionaire and a Republican candidate for mayor, paid Makor a visit, as part of a series (Mark Green and Alan Hevesi had been in the week before) put together by Kehila, a political group for young Jewish professionals.

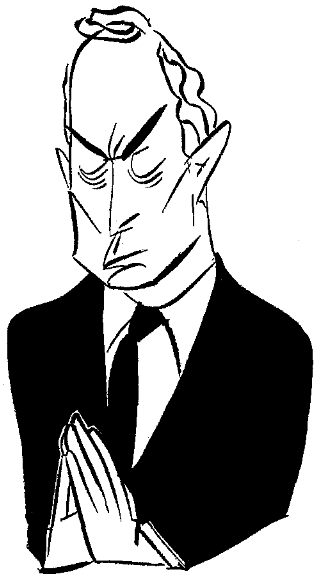
Bloomberg arrived a few minutes late. He was quite tan, and he seemed to have the hang of shaking strangers' hands and telling them his name. As he was being introduced, he jingled the change in his pocket and scanned the audience, which brought to mind a college-dorm common room full of campus activists.

"It's nice to be here," Bloomberg said, up at the lectern. He raced, pleasantly, through his set of campaign themes (the four components of the mayor's job, in his view, are management, leadership, listening, and being accountable) and touched occasionally on the big issues, such as public education (the organizers of one program "can't even send the kids for coffee—they can't read, they can't count, they can't look you in the eye") and the city's vendetta against ferrets ("Far as I know, nobody has ever eaten or worn a ferret, so I don't know why anybody cares"). Ideologically, he seemed to fall somewhere between Rudolph Giuliani and Joey Adams.

When he was finished, hands shot up. One woman, who described herself as "extremely Zionistic," launched into a multitiered arrangement of seemingly unrelated questions, one of which was: "What Jewish causes do you support?"

"I apologize for trying to match the length of the answer to the length of the question," Bloomberg said, with the faint-est of smiles, before citing a movie he's producing, "Focus," based on a novel by Arthur Miller. It concerns a man whose life falls apart after he gets glasses, because everyone mistakes him for a Jew. "It comes out in October," Bloomberg said, "and it stars Laura Dern and William Macy."

"That's philanthropy?" one man muttered.



Michael Bloomberg

Another man asked the candidate about school prayer. Earlier that day, Bloomberg had said that he had nothing against it, and now he reiterated that position, recalling how he had said the Lord's Prayer as a child in class. "I think we've gotten a little too P.C.-ish," he said. "If you want to pray, I don't have a problem."

After he'd gone, two sisters from Florida, Dana and Candi Obrentz—twenty-five and twenty-nine years old, respectively, both freckled and dark-haired—lingered outside Makor and shared their thoughts. "He impressed me," Dana said, "though I found his views to be rather idealistic, and I think that comes from a lack of experience in a political arena."

She went on, "He looked very tan. Mark Green, when he was here, was so tan I thought, Either you've been spending way too much time on the golf course or you're hitting the salon." The sisters said that they were supporting Alan Hevesi. As Dana explained why, a tall young man, neatly dressed, walked up to Candi and attempted to strike up a conversation.

"I know you," she said. "What's your name?"

"Seth Price," he said. He tried, in vain, to come up with a friend they might have in common.

"Wait, I don't know you," Candi said. After a moment, he walked off. "That was so odd," Candi said.

"Who was that?" Dana asked.

"I have no idea" Candi said.

This kind of thing seemed to happen to them often at Makor. "That's the feeling we've gotten," Candi said.

"People are checking you out," Dana said.

"We were here for an anti-racism workshop," Candi said. "And they gave us drink vouchers, and we were like 'What the hell? Let's go to the bar and have a drink.' It was like I had holes in the back of my head. People staring. And one guy said, 'Are you sure you're Jewish?' and I thought, I can't do this."

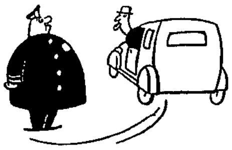
Dana said, "When you go to an anti-racism workshop and you hear an ex-neo-Nazi speak about his life as a skinhead, it's really not a place to pick someone up."

A few blocks away, in the Seventy-second Street subway station, Seth Price was waiting for a downtown train. He is thirty-one years old, socially liberal, fiscally conservative, and single. He said that he'd liked Bloomberg, but that he had not been very impressed with his political skills. "I was shocked he announced he was for school prayer," Price said. "He's talking to a Jewish group!"

Price boarded a train. "He seems not quite able to articulate why he'd want to be mayor. I didn't see the fire in the belly, other than the fact that he wants to win and he doesn't like losing. To me, that's not enough. It's sort of like courting a really attractive girl—once you get her, you have to deal with all the issues that come along with her." Price added that he was leaning toward Hevesi, too.

—*Nick Paumgarten*

ON PATROL
SERGEANT ROAD RAGE



Sergeant Louis V. Dini, of the Suffolk County Highway Patrol, was sitting in traffic on the Long Island Expressway at the height of the Friday-afternoon Hamptons rush hour not long ago, when a Suzuki motorcycle up ahead squeezed by a car in the same lane. "Son of a bitch!" Dini said, and he gunned his unmarked Ford Crown Victoria, maneuvering past Explorers and Porsches, until he'd caught up to the bike. "We got him," he said. The biker pulled over, and Dini stepped out and issued the biker a ticket for "splitting the lane"—moving violation, seventy dollars.

In his uniform—a starched blue shirt, blue jodhpurs, black leather boots—Dini looked fit and regimental. He has thick eyebrows and salt-and-pepper hair. On the job twenty years, he seems not to have lost any enthusiasm for enforcing the law. One evening recently, he arrived home to find that the car belonging to his teen-age daughter's date was parked illegally, nose to nose with his patrol car. Dini threatened to write the boy a ticket, then threw him out of the house.

Dini supervises Operation SITE, a new Suffolk County initiative, using patrolmen in unmarked cars, to curb road rage and aggressive driving along the main arteries of eastern Long Island. One Sunday, at the ramp leading onto the L.I.E. from County Road 111, Dini and his men issued eighty-eight tickets in three hours. Though rage itself is not illegal ("It's really not a crime to give someone the finger," Dini said), many manifestations of it are. "Everybody's impatient—people want to get out there and they get cranky," Dini said. "They start cutting each other off, driving on the shoulders." A while back, for instance, two cars jostled for position until, at Exit 68, the drivers pulled over, got out, and started throwing punches. Much rubbernecking ensued, slowing the flow of traffic and, presumably, inducing yet more rage. Nonetheless, it's the subtle violations that annoy Dini the most. "My biggest pet peeve, I think, is failing to signal a lane change," he said.

Up ahead, a pickup truck crossed into the H.O.V. (high-occupancy-vehicle) lane. "Now, do you see what this guy just did? He entered illegally!" Dini said, and gunned the accelerator. "Look at that! The S.U.V. just did it even worse. I'm going to get the S.U.V., because he didn't even signal." Dini flipped a switch, and the Crown Victoria's siren blared.

The S.U.V. pulled over (a black Lexus, woman at the wheel), and Dini pointed out the license-plate frame. "Look

THERE ONCE WAS A MAN NAMED JOHN PAUL

CASTEL GANDOLFO, Italy (Reuters)—President George Bush, 55, dressed in a dark suit, appeared slightly nervous as he was introduced to the 81-year-old Pope John Paul II, who greeted him while leaning on a cane. Bush, asked later about his feelings during the meeting, said: "It's hard to describe. I'm not poetic enough to describe what it's like to be in his presence."

There once was a man named
John Paul.
His hat made him look ten
feet tall.
Though we didn't agree
On the death penalty,
He wasn't a bad guy at all.

My favorite tree is the maple.
My favorite fruit is the apple.
And now that I've met
Good old John Paul, you bet
That my favorite people are papal.

After that Genoa strife,
Meeting the Pope changed my life.
He's truly sublime
(That means holy, big time).
I hope that I'll soon meet his wife.

You know how you always make fun
Because I'm a President's son?
Well, that's not really fair,
The Pope's also an heir:
His daddy's name was John Paul I.

—*Ben Greenman*

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what the plate says—'Manhattan.'" He approached the car, and then, after a moment, returned to his own and reached, sighing, for his summons pad. "She's a nice lady, but she did do something egregious," he said. "See, it's not always fun."

Around five o'clock, a few exits farther west, Dini watched an electric-green Dodge pickup cross from the middle lane into the left lane and then into the H.O.V. lane.

"Look at that truck!" Dini said, tightening his grip on the wheel. A vein in his right hand throbbed. He took off in pursuit, lights flashing. The traffic peeled aside to let him through.

The pickup had commercial plates and numerous bumper stickers that said "New York State Sheriff's Association." As Dini strode up, the driver, a thirtyish man with a strong jaw, rolled down his window.

"My name is Sergeant Dini, from Highway Patrol, and the reason I stopped you is because you illegally entered the H.O.V. lane." (Patrollers are trained to identify themselves immediately and state the offense. The technique, called "verbal judo," is designed to defuse high-octane encounters.)

The driver flipped through his wallet. He fingered a Police Benevolent Association card before handing Dini his driver's license. "I'm trying to get to Montauk," the man said, as though it were some kind of password. Dini returned to his car, reached for his pad, considered the violations for a moment—failing to signal a lane change, illegally entering the H.O.V. lane, driving a commercial vehicle in the H.O.V. lane, driving in the H.O.V. lane without proper occupancy, no seat belt—and then, in tidy capital letters, wrote "SINGLE OCCUPANCY IN AN H.O.V. LANE" while muttering under his breath, "Well, with all the police stickers you've got on your vehicle and the P.B.A. card you tried to show me, I'm writing you a ticket." Dini looked up. "See how I felt bad for the lady before? I don't feel bad for this guy," he said. "If it's a mistake of the head because you just weren't thinking and it was an accident, that's one thing. But this was a mistake of the heart."

—*Katherine Rosman*

POSTSCRIPT
EUDORA WELTY

Eudora Welty, who died the other day at the age of ninety-two, wrote seven stories for this magazine between 1951 and 1969, including "The Ponder Heart" and "The Optimist's Daughter," which are masterworks by any measure. We were a little late, in truth, in taking her up, but she forgave us. Long-term staff members still remember her rare visits to the office—she'd come North from her native Mississippi to see her publisher and her agent, and to have lunch with her *New Yorker* editor, William Maxwell—and the pleasure that one took from her low, amused conversational tone, which lingered in the room after she'd gone, like a whiff of warm garden. Tall and long-necked, and apologetically bending to lessen that, she dressed in soft, interesting layers, and assumed not that you knew what a star she was but that the two of you had already met, or somehow barely missed meeting, long ago, and were now simply resuming a line of thought. She must have known that one did know her, in exactly that fashion, from her writing, which always conveyed the compliment of a simplicity and an extraordinary intelligence that were magically possessed as well (or so it seemed) by the reader.

In 1983, Mrs. Welty delivered three notable lectures at Harvard on how she grew to be a writer. Subsequently published under the title "One Writer's Beginnings," they became a modest but essential text for anyone even distantly in the same line of work. How did she begin? William Maxwell, reviewing the book here in 1984, pointed out that Eudora had been read aloud to by her mother from the age of two. "Many children have loved to be read to who didn't become writers," he went on. "There has to be something else, a kind of fermentation. 'In my sensory education,' Miss Welty says, 'I include my physical awareness of the *word*. Of a certain word, that is; the connection it has with what it stands for. At around age six, perhaps, I was standing by myself in our front yard waiting for supper, just at that hour in a late summer day when the sun is already below the horizon and the risen full moon in the visible sky stops being chalky and begins to take on light. There comes a moment, and I saw it then, when the moon goes from flat to round. For the first time it met my eyes as a globe. The word "moon" came into my mouth as though fed to me out of a silver spoon.' "

—*Roger Angell*

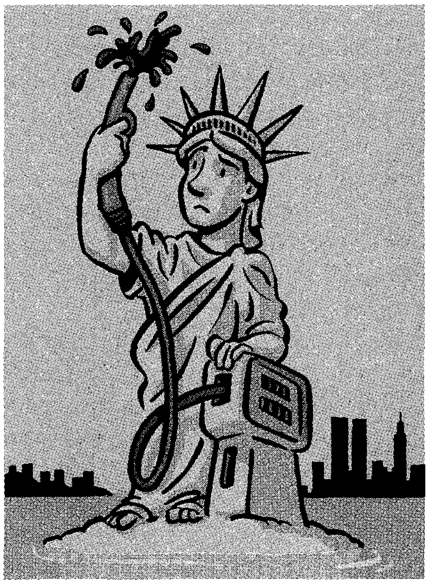
THE FINANCIAL PAGE
OUR PRECIOUS FOSSIL FLUIDS

When the leaders of the world's industrial powers gathered in Genoa the week before last for the annual meeting of the G-8, the divisions seemed clear. Outside, in the streets, there were the demonstrators, hostile to free markets and global trade. Inside, at the bargaining table, there were the politicians, advocates of open markets and globalization. But don't let their talk fool you. The politicians stud their rhetoric with paeans to free markets, yet when it comes to making policy they're just like the hell-raisers outside the Palazzo Ducale. Come to think of it, Dick Cheney would've fit right in, running around Genoa with a pink bandanna and a sign reading "Imports Kill!"

Vice-President Cheney and his colleagues in the Bush Administration have been very busy lately spreading their own peculiar version of the anti-globalization message. Earlier this month, Cheney told a town meeting in Pennsylvania that in order to avoid becoming too dependent on oil imports from foreign producers who "do not wish us well" America needs to let oil companies do more drilling and exploration on federal land. And Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill is planning to curb steel imports in order to raise prices and resuscitate the moribund domestic steel industry. When it comes to open markets, the Bush Administration's position is positively Augustinian: "Give us globalization, Lord, but not yet."

This embrace of economic nationalism is partly just a sop to important political constituencies, like big oil and organized labor. But Cheney and O'Neill are also invoking a viscerally appealing idea: that a country is better off when it's economically self-sufficient, and not dependent on trade. We usually associate this kind of home-team economics with Europe, but it's a staple of American politics, too. Remember the mid-nineteen-eighties, when the Pentagon feared that Japan's domination of the semiconductor industry would devastate our way of life? It didn't happen. Economic nationalism makes no more sense now than it did then. Self-sufficiency is neither attainable nor desirable. Nations engage in trade not because they have to but because they want to. It lets them concentrate on what they do best. We don't make sneakers or memory chips anymore for the same reason that you don't cut your own hair: you have better things to do.

And we have better things to do than make steel. Our big steel companies are inefficient and unproductive. Every minute that they stay in business, they divert capital that would be better invested elsewhere. Protectionists often say they're preserving jobs, but the numbers don't add up. There are only about two hundred thousand steelworkers, but millions of people work in industries that depend on cheap steel. All Big Steel really has going for it is nostalgia for the days when America was the steelmaker to the world, and the vague notion that depending on Europe or Brazil for steel is somehow perilous.



Cheney, in his quest to open up federal lands to oil exploration, is playing even more strongly on that nationalist distrust of trade. Because America doesn't have enough domestic oil, Cheney said, "We're increasingly subject to prices set by others." Cheney's problem with those "others" is that they're foreigners. His real problem with them should be that they're members of a cartel: OPEC. It doesn't make a difference, after all, whether you buy oil from Aramco (the Saudi Arabian oil company) or Texaco. You're going to pay the same price in the end, and that price will be determined, essentially, by OPEC. Cheney's talk about malevolent "others" makes it sound as if American oil companies cared more about what's good for America than Saudi Arabia or Nigeria do. But Exxon-Mobil and Texaco are giant multinational corporations, beholden to shareholders around the world; they are not members of Team U.S.A. And when they sell oil they follow OPEC's lead. They don't offer American citizens special discounts. Letting oil companies drill on federal land won't change that.

If the Bush Administration really wanted to do something about the cost of energy, it would stop wrapping itself in the flag, start taking the idea of globalization seriously, and go after OPEC. That's a tall order, sure. But in the nineteen-nineties the Justice Department broke up international cartels in vitamins, lysine, and graphite electrodes, fining companies hundreds of millions of dollars and sending executives to prison. OPEC is a much bigger target, but it's no less deserving. If the concern is foreign policy, then use the World Trade Organization. Six OPEC members already belong to the W.T.O., and Saudi Arabia is eager to join. Perhaps we could ask the Saudis whether, as a condition of membership, they'd be kind enough to stop orchestrating an international price-fixing conspiracy.

The free-market hero who really belonged in Genoa was a man named Carl Prewitt, who runs a gas station in Birmingham, Alabama. He sells about fifteen hundred gallons of gas a day. Last year, Prewitt sued OPEC for violating antitrust law, and he won the case: a few months ago, a federal judge handed down a one-year injunction prohibiting OPEC from conspiring to limit oil production. OPEC—which had previously ignored the suit—has since persuaded a second judge to set aside that decision and start over. The judge is now hearing arguments about whether OPEC can even be sued in federal court. The governments of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Nigeria have all filed briefs in support of OPEC. The United States government, meanwhile, has done nothing. And last week OPEC announced that to keep prices high it was slashing production by a million barrels a day.

—*James Surowiecki*

CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

LETTER FROM MOSCOW

DEEP IN THE WOODS

Solzhenitsyn, a new book, and the new Russia.

BY DAVID REMNICK

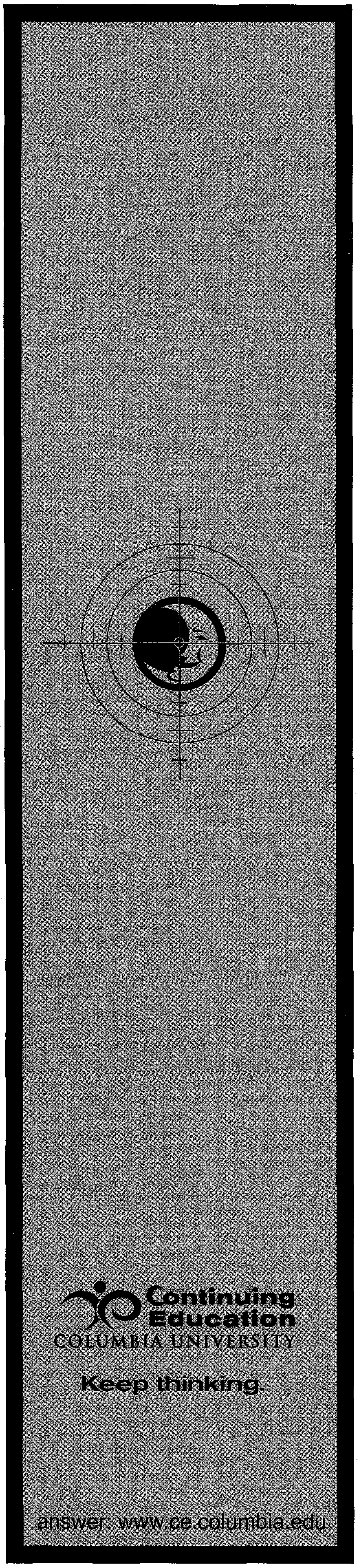
Not long ago, during the White Nights, I took a walk from the gates of the Kremlin, past the underground shopping mall on Manezh Square, and up Tverskaya Street, the ground zero of Russian neo-capitalism. There was a time when it was no simple matter to get, say, a bowl of borscht on this street. Now it's entirely possible to order (as one strolls at random) a *macchiato* at Coffee Bean, a calzone at Sbarro, a Cadillac sedan, a ten-thousand-dollar ball gown, VCRs, DVDs, and, should you still desire it, a bowl of borscht. Every year brings a new accretion of commercialism to Tverskaya—more stores, more restaurants, more hotels. Depending on the state of things, there are even some Muscovites who can buy as well as look.

Suddenly, there was a thunderclap and a flash summer storm. Rain fell in cool sheets. I ducked into the Young Guard bookstore. It was crowded but not unpleasantly so; it was clean and air-conditioned, a helpful sales staff roamed the floor, and the shelves were filled with the collected works of authors who, little more than a decade ago, were banned by Soviet censors. As I was riffling through a memoir by an actor I'd met—a film star who once gave a public performance of Joseph Brodsky's poems when that was something dangerous and delicious—the store manager came on the loudspeaker, and, in the beguiling voice of unembarrassed salesmanship, more K mart than commissar, she said, "Respected shoppers! Please note that today we are featuring a new title, which can be found near the cashier's desk. It's a volume by the Nobel Prize-winning author of 'The Gulag Archipelago,' Aleksandr Isayevich Solzhenitsyn. The book is called 'Two Hundred Years Together,' a history of Russian-Jewish relations."

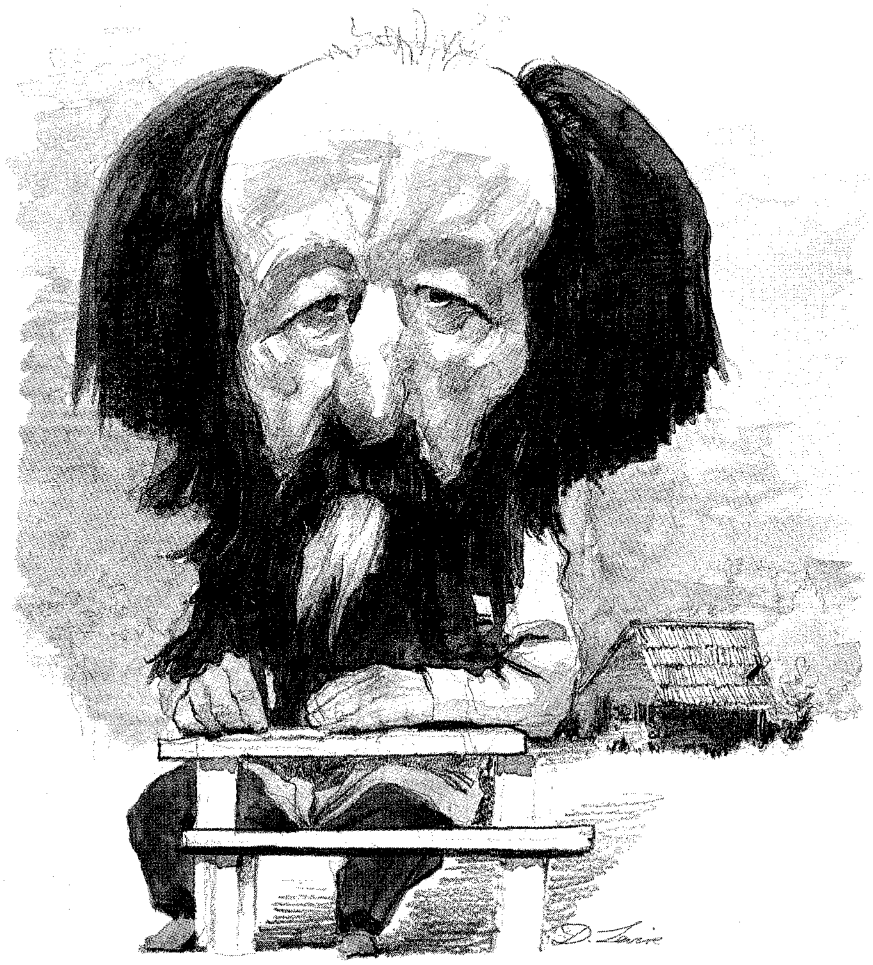
No one stopped, no one seemed in the least surprised. In fact, in the next half hour, hardly anyone dropped by to check out this curious new book. In contemporary Russia, history has been ruthless in its speed, and the public's memory is fickle. Solzhenitsyn is eighty-two. For younger people, especially, his name marks just another event in a half-remembered Soviet past: the Revolution, the agreement at Brest-Litovsk, the defeat of the Whites, the camps, Stalingrad, Yuri Gagarin . . . Solzhenitsyn. When Solzhenitsyn returned to Russia in May of 1994, after twenty years of forced exile, he was welcomed by a mixture of celebration, derision, and indifference. Some younger writers seemed determined to carve out a place for themselves by declaring the old man a reactionary egomaniac, a bore, passé. These harsh greetings, along with a generally negative critical reception to his cycle of historical novels, "The Red Wheel," left Solzhenitsyn resentful at times, though he was loath to admit it.

Browsing the shelves, I picked up a volume of Solzhenitsyn's short stories published last year. The second half of the book is taken up with the tales he's written since coming home: "Ego," "On the Extremes," "Apricot Jam." The first half is made up of those early, classic stories that reordered the politics and the literature of the Soviet Union in the early sixties: notably, "An Incident at Krechetovka Station" and "One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich." As one reads "Matryona's House," there comes a chill, a foreshadowing of the author's exiles and returns:

> During the summer of the year 1956, I came back at random from the hot, dusty desertlands—simply to Russia. No one was waiting for me or had invited me anywhere, because I had been detained from returning for a little stretch of ten years. I simply wanted to get back into the heart of the country—out of the heat, into woodlands with rustling leaves. I wanted to cut myself loose and get lost in the innermost heart of Russia—if there were any such thing—and live there.


Continuing Education
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
Keep thinking.
answer: www.ce.columbia.edu

Solzhenitsyn, like the narrator of his story and like millions of others, made his way back west after "a little stretch" in the camps—the myriad islands of the gulag archipelago—and in internal exile. He returned and for twenty years wrote, mainly in secret, the story of Soviet tyranny. When "The Gulag Archipelago" was published abroad, in 1974, the Soviet leadership arrested Solzhenitsyn, put him onto a plane, and sent him to the West. In exile, he not only dreamed of his return, he was confident of it—just as he was confident of the regime's collapse. On May 26, 1994, he and his wife, Natalia, flew from their home in Vermont to Magadan, on the Sea of Okhotsk, which had been one of the principal centers of the gulag system. For the next two months, he and his family travelled by train toward Moscow, stopping in Vladivostok, Khabarovsk, Irkutsk, Krasnoyarsk, Novosibirsk—seventeen stops in all. It was a return not without a sense of occasion and ego (the BBC made a documentary and paid for special railway cars). Solzhenitsyn hardly "lost" himself in innermost Russia this time. Crowds came to hear him speak at every stop, he signed books, he was on local television; it was the grandest author tour in history. But there was also a great poignancy in the journey. Solzhenitsyn had done as much as any man to bring an end to seven decades of oppression in Russia, and it was unlikely that he would ever travel that extensively in his own country again. This was at once a return, a welcome, and a farewell.



Solzhenitsyn offers a fresh interpretation of the shared history of Russians and Jews.

DAVID LEVINE

When the convoy finally arrived in Moscow, Boris Yeltsin, who had become the first President of a post-Communist Russia, tried to win over Solzhenitsyn, just as he had tried to win over Andrei Sakharov, in the late eighties. Vyacheslav Kostikov, Yeltsin's former press secretary, wrote in a memoir, "His aides sought to put him in an overbearing frame of mind. He was told: 'Who is this Solzhenitsyn? After all, he is not a classic, not a Leo Tolstoy. And what's more, everyone is tired of him. Well, he suffered under totalitarianism, and, yes, he is an expert on history, but there are thousands more like him! While you, Boris Nikolayevich, are one of a kind.' Yeltsin, however, chose a different tone. The conversation proceeded easily and very frankly, without any attempts to paper over the political differences. They talked for four hours and even had a little vodka."

The meeting may have been friendly, but Solzhenitsyn's critique of Yeltsin, on television and in two short books of political writing—"The Russian Question at the End of the Twentieth Century" (1994) and "Russia in Collapse" (1998)—only intensified. Solzhenitsyn blamed Yeltsin for breaking up the old Union without regard for the interests of the twenty-five million Russians who now found themselves abroad in the former Soviet republics; for economic reforms that "impoverished" the nation; for behaving "like slaves" to the West and selling out Russia's interests to the International Monetary Fund and NATO; for promoting corruption; for failing to establish any real democratic institutions on the grass-roots level. Solzhenitsyn declared that in Russian history there had been three *smuty,* or "times of troubles": the political upheaval in the seventeenth century that established the Romanov dynasty; the revolutionary year of 1917; and now. Solzhenitsyn was no longer saying the unsayable—most of his opinions were common fare and none were forbidden—but his tone was no less fierce than it had been in "Gulag." By declaring the present, but not, say, the nineteen-thirties, a time of troubles, he seemed to relegate Yeltsin to a ring of Inferno even lower than Stalin's.

In 1998, on Solzhenitsyn's eightieth birthday, Yeltsin still seemed eager to please the writer and awarded him the highest of all state honors, the Order of St. Andrew. Solzhenitsyn turned it down. "In today's conditions, when people are starving and striking just to get their wages, I cannot accept this award," he said. "Maybe in many years' time, when Russia overcomes its insurmountable problems, my sons may be able to accept this award." When Yeltsin left office, on the eve of 2000, Solzhenitsyn was furious that the new President, Vladimir Putin, had granted his predecessor immunity from prosecution. Solzhenitsyn declared that Yeltsin "along with another one or two hundred people must be brought to book."

By now, Solzhenitsyn had managed to alienate almost everyone. The Communists despised him, of course, and the hard-line Russian nationalists, who had once hoped he would be their standard-bearer, found him too liberal. The liberals, who looked west for their models, could not take seriously Solzhenitsyn's derisory view of the West as a trove of useless materialism and a wasteland of spiritual emptiness. Nor could they abide conservative positions such as his support for the reinstatement of the death penalty.

IN THE SALT MARSH

How faithfully grass holds the shape of the sea it loves,
how it molds itself to the waves, how the dried salt
peaks into cowlicks the combed mane of the marsh.
Tousled by tides, it pitches tents, breaks into turrets
and cockscombs and whorled nests and green baskets
for the bleached armor of fiddler crabs, like earrings
hung by the sea on lobes of darkness. Could I lay my ear
on that darkness where the tide's trowel smooths islands
and scallops the sand, moon-tugged, till it slows
and turns? Could I keep the past in the present's eye?
Could I know what the grass knows?

—*Nancy Willard*

When Solzhenitsyn first arrived in Moscow, his name was invoked as a possible successor to Yeltsin. This was always a fantasy, but it did indicate his enormous prestige. And yet with time, and with Solzhenitsyn's weekly exposure on television, the majority of the public soured on him or grew indifferent. His television appearances were cancelled. He fell in the political ratings and then disappeared from them. He began to appear less and less in public. But still he continued to write. I was able to obtain, through his sons Ignat, a concert pianist and conductor in Philadelphia, and Stephan, an urban-planning and environmental consultant in Boston, an advance copy of the first volume of "Two Hundred Years Together" and made plans to pay him a visit on the outer edge of the capital.

As it happened, I arrived in Moscow just after George W. Bush had met with Putin in Slovenia. Bush had come into office vowing that he would not be seduced by a Russian leader the way he thought Bill Clinton had been by Yeltsin. And so it was a matter of hilarity among the former Russian dissidents I saw that Bush, after one short day in Putin's presence, declared that he had "looked the man in the eye" and found him to be "very straightforward and trustworthy." "I was able to get a sense of his soul," Bush said. It appeared to mean little to Bush that Putin had rebuffed him on missile defense, or that Russia was still waging war on the Chechens, in the south, and on the media in Moscow, or that Putin was making increasingly friendly overtures to Iran and Iraq. In the absence of knowledge and preparation, Bush relied on metaphysical self-confidence. What he found in the soul of a career K.G.B. officer was "a remarkable leader." It reminded a friend of mine of the moment in "Annie Hall" when Alvy Singer describes how he was thrown out of college for cheating on his metaphysics final; he had looked into the soul of the boy sitting next to him.

The vast majority of Russians were apparently every bit as enamored of Vladimir Putin. Putin's approval ratings, after a year and a half in office, were around seventy per cent. People admire Putin because he appears not to suffer from the sins of Yeltsin. Where Yeltsin was bombastic and unpredictable, Putin is steady, purposefully dull. Where Yeltsin was a tsar, Putin is chief bureaucrat. He has wisely tamed his own language—he once vowed to kill the Chechens even "in their outhouses"—and now he wants to "put an end to the resistance by illegal armed formations." At least in imagery, he has delivered on a promise of stability. It seems for the moment not to matter that this stability has less to do with Putin's sobriety than with the high price of oil. The country's economic comeback after its August, 1998, crash resembles the stability of the Brezhnev era: Russia still does not produce much that the world wants except natural resources.

Putin's opposition is easy to define—an aging cadre of followers of the Communist Party and some liberals, like Grigory Yavlinsky, of the Yabloko Party—but, for the moment, they pose no great threat to him. What's more, there is little nostalgia for the old battles. So many of the warriors of the late eighties and the nineties have scattered, died, or been discredited. And some of the contemporary figures who put themselves forward as avatars of democracy were hardly heroic. Until Putin brought low the NTV network—the only independent, privately owned national television outlet in the country—and replaced its leadership, its most prominent broadcaster was Yevgeny Kiselyov, who hosted a Sunday-night news-magazine show called "Itogi." Kiselyov's reputation was based on a showy fearlessness; and yet he seemed to have no ear at all for the ordinary Russian or for the poor. One night, he went on the air and coyly revealed, by way of humanizing himself, that he had a terrible weakness for clarets of exceptional vintages. To prove it, he took viewers on a tour of his considerable wine cellar. This was not exactly Andrei Sakharov with his net shopping bag and shabby suit.

One afternoon, I dropped by the House of Journalists, on the Boulevard Ring Road, where a group of human-rights activists was holding a conference. During a break, I met for coffee with Aleksandr Podrabinek, an old friend who, since 1987, had been publishing an independent newspaper called *Ekspress-Khronika*, which reported news that the bigger papers and the networks ignored. Podrabinek is a small, almost impish man in his late forties. From 1978 to 1983, he was forced to live in eastern Siberia in both labor camps and internal exile, for the sin of having written a book, "Punitive Medicine," about the Soviet regime's use of psychiatric hospitals to deal with political dissent. He had no illusions about Yeltsin, and remains a fierce opponent of the war in Chechnya, but for all Yeltsin's mistakes, he said, the country was leaving a relatively "golden" era and moving somewhere darker. "The idea of democracy has failed to capture the popular imagination to any great degree," he said. "Yeltsin was a man of broader views and vision than Putin. Now we have someone who has the intellect of an Army sergeant. He gives people simple orders and he obeys simple orders. He has no great vision except the creation of a vertical construct of power."

Putin spent most of his adult life as a K.G.B. officer, but his résumé gives off a different, more varied, resonance in Russia than it does abroad, Podrabinek said. Even Sakharov once said that, despite the K.G.B.'s role in the terror of the Communist regime, it was also a bastion of competency, of people who understood what was really going on behind the official façade. "It doesn't really matter to most people that Putin was a K.G.B. officer," Podrabinek said. "The idea of reputation is not a major one here. People elect bandits as governors knowing they are bandits—in the Far East, for example. Or they elect a K.G.B. officer or a hard-line Communist. They vote for those people whose names are most in front of them. Russia's mentality is too easy to shape, as has been shown over and over."

As the human-rights movement in Russia has shifted to the margins, its newspapers and conferences are often funded either by Western foundations or not at all. *Ekspress-Khronika*, with a peak circulation of sixty-five thousand, used to run on the largesse of the National Endowment for Democracy; now the sense of urgency is gone, and so is much of the movement's financial support. Podrabinek has not been able to publish the paper for a year. When I asked him about this, he just laughed. "Soon it will be like the old days—just a few dissidents and some kindly Westerners bringing in money secretly in their belts and shoes. But, remember, it is possible to slide backward a long way, especially if the West does not bother to pay much attention. . . . What we really need, I think, is a new generation of politicians who are willing to say that Russia, just like everyone else, needs a normal democratic system. Until that, maybe we will wander in the desert for forty years."

A few hours later, I met with one of Podrabinek's colleagues at the conference, Ludmilla Alexeyeva, who is the chairman of the Moscow-Helsinki group. Alexeyeva is in her seventies. She lives just off the Old Arbat, the pedestrian mall, which has long featured venders selling T-shirts of high post-Soviet irony; a favorite, advertising "McLenin's," juxtaposes Vladimir Ilyich in profile and the Golden Arches. Alexeyeva immigrated to the United States in 1977 and then came back to live in Moscow in 1992.

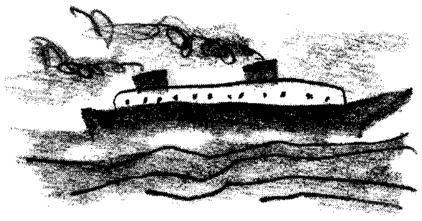
"The biggest problem we have is the problem of law, the judicial system," she said. "The constitution was rewritten in 1993, so there are new laws, but no one knows these laws, no one follows them. The judges are corrupt, ignorant, or they are old enough so that all their legal 'thinking' and habits were formed in Soviet times. Nearly all of these judges take the Soviet view that the goal of the court is, above all, to protect the interest of the state. There is little or no thought to the individual."

When I suggested that the fall of the Communist state, the popularity of Putin, and a general decline in politics as a Russian obsession had led to the marginalization of the human-rights movement, Alexeyeva disagreed, and gave an indulgent smile.

"Not marginalized," she said. "Changed."

In the old days, the movement was composed of extremely small groups of urban intellectuals gathering secret petitions, furtively meeting with Western visitors, and risking jail at every turn. Nowadays, it has taken the shape of a loosely knit national Legal Aid Society. In the cities and the provinces, young lawyers with a firm grasp of modern juridical practice and ethics have set up shop in offices and courts.

"There are thousands of such people," Alexeyeva said. "That's not marginalization. That's a real step forward."



One cloudy afternoon, I drove out of Moscow to the pretty village of Peredelkino. During the Soviet period, the government encouraged the Writers' Union to allocate dachas in Peredelkino to writers, especially to writers who were ideologically reliable, but also to true artists like Pasternak and Rostropovich. (At one point in the sixties, Solzhenitsyn lived with friends here.) Some of the Peredelkino dachas have been bought up by young businessmen—there's a lot of high-end construction going on behind the old green gates—but there are still a great many writers around. I'd come out to see Lev Timofeyev, an economist who had been sent to a prison camp in the Urals under Gorbachev, in 1985, for having written and distributed a book on the illegal, or shadow, economy. Along with dozens of other political prisoners, Timofeyev was freed in 1987 and became an active figure in the pro-democracy movement. In the nineties, he regained his bearings as a scholar, publishing a series of books on the illegal economy and narcobusiness. He also writes shorter pieces for *Izvestia* and the Moscow *News* and teaches at the Russian State University for the Humanities. He looked younger than he did ten years ago.

"Well," he said sheepishly as we greeted each other at the gate to his dacha. "I divorced and married a young wife. It happens."

We went inside to a screened porch and a table laden with peaches, grapes, wild strawberries, and a bowl of cherries.

"The last time we saw each other, you know when it was?" Timofeyev said. "It was inside the White House on the last night of the putsch." That was August 21, 1991, the night the K.G.B.-led coup collapsed and, with it, the Communist regime. By Christmas night, Gorbachev had transferred power to Yeltsin and the Soviet Union was dissolved.

Timofeyev was in agreement with his colleagues in the human-rights movement on Chechnya and the assault on the press, but he was far more sanguine than many of the others I met. Timofeyev's view of the economy is far different from the standard analysis: that Russia is suffering from the rise of a small number of ruthless oligarchs who came to control major industries through their political connections.

"Not one person in Russia lives outside the reality of a shadow Russia," he said. "As soon as you leave your house or apartment in the morning, you find yourself in a world of bribes, contraband, unregistered activity, 'black cash,' and the rest." Outside, it began to thunder—one clap was so loud I jumped from my chair—then came rain. A cool mist drifted through the screen. "This is not something to do with the oligarchs," Timofeyev went on, "nothing to do with the big businessmen you read about in the papers, but everyone—peasants, teachers, workers in a factory, everyone. And, in this sense, nothing really changed between the Soviet period and now. It changed only in quantity, which became infinitely greater. The shadow economy is a normal market of buying and selling. After all, there used to be prices for everything before: positions in the Communist Party were the assets then, and they were worth something and you paid for them. Now the fruits of the market are different, but there are no laws or structures to give meaning to a true market economy. The examples are everywhere. My neighbor here just went to get a driver's license, but it soon became clear that the only way to get this was to pay two hundred dollars to the guy who gives the exam. He gives fifteen or twenty of these exams a day. He can't keep all the money—he has to distribute it around a little—but it's a living. . . . This system works, but it is not productive like an open economy. It only maintains daily life, it's a kind of holding pattern.

"I am an economist, so what interests me most about Putin is that. In Russia, it will be impossible to have democratic change that is serious without a developed market economy. And, in that regard, I think Putin and his team have done more in a year than Yeltsin and his team did in ten years. Yeltsin, of course, laid the groundwork, and he probably needed that time. But Putin has done well. Most important, there is finally a flat income tax of thirteen per cent. Before, hardly anyone paid taxes at all. This is a major advance. There is now a law on land for non-agricultural use, legislation on trial by jury. And there is an over-all tendency to avoid any reactionary economic thinking. Considering what some people were expecting, I can't ask for much more."

In 1989, I had gone with Timofeyev to a theatrical production of "One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich." When I mentioned that I was going to visit Solzhenitsyn the next day, Timofeyev reacted like the other former prisoners and dissidents I had met in the past. He thought that Solzhenitsyn's achievements, especially "One Day" and "Gulag," were so great and his independence and integrity were so beyond judgment that to criticize him, even to engage his ideas critically, was wrong.

"I have a great many disagreements with Aleksandr Isayevich, but I have no wish to argue with him," Timofeyev said. "There is probably no life in the entire twentieth century that has so many plusses next to it. No one in this century, at least no one in Russia, except Sakharov, is on his level. So he can say what he wants, it's his right." Timofeyev paused, and then he went on, saying, "But, at the same time, his influence has diminished. When, many years ago, he wrote his essay *'Zhit' ne po lzhi!'* "—"Live Not by Lies!"—"our reaction was the same as your reaction to that thunderclap a little while ago. The effect was that startling. But when I heard him on television I have to admit that it was clear to me that he is a fact of literary life still, but not really a crucial actor in political or social life."

Had Solzhenitsyn lost his moral authority since coming home? I asked.

"In the modern world, moral authorities are proof of a society's inability to live a decent life," Timofeyev said. "To have to rely so much on someone like Solzhenitsyn or Sakharov is a sure sign that something is wrong. Nowadays, I can express myself not by quietly identifying myself with a figure like that but by writing, reading, voting, doing business, whatever it is. This is a good thing. Society needs a Solzhenitsyn in a time of emergency, far less so now."

The next afternoon, Natalia Solzhenitsyn picked me up at my hotel in a gray Volvo. She is a highly intelligent and energetic woman in her early sixties, and she has helped her husband in every way possible: while Solzhenitsyn wrote, often staying in his study for days at a time, she ran the household, raised their three sons (a son from her previous marriage, Dmitri, died in 1994), carried out research, typed and retyped manuscripts, edited a series of volumes on Russian history, administered a fund for camp veterans using the proceeds from "The Gulag Archipelago," organized the family archives, and planned their move home. In Vermont, Natalia was Solzhenitsyn's liaison with the world; she retains that function here, dealing with publishers, reporters, readers, harassers. I doubt if Aleksandr Isayevich has picked up a ringing telephone in decades. Natalia grew up in Moscow, and knows every street and alley, but her husband is not a real Muscovite; he is from a provincial city, Rostov, and in his work celebrates, even romanticizes at times, the verities of village life. Their house is in Troitse-Lykovo, a verdant pocket along the Moscow River, a place that only now, with urban sprawl, can be called part of the capital.

"At first," she was saying in the car, "when we returned home, Aleksandr Isayevich would come downtown for various things a couple of times a month. Then it became once a month."

"And now?" I asked.

"And now almost never. Aleksandr Isayevich doesn't really live in Moscow. He lives in the woods."

The traffic in Moscow has grown horrendous in recent years. It took us three-quarters of an hour to drive the ten miles west to Troitse-Lykovo. Finally, Natalia turned off the main road and onto a narrow, pitted lane. We passed some small cottages and then pulled up to a tall gate painted forest green.

"We don't have automatic openers in Russia yet," Natalia said as she cheerfully hopped out of the car. She unlocked the gate and pushed it open. The effect was incredible: we were suddenly looking into a pristine wood. She got back in the car and slowly rumbled past a small house where her eldest son, Yermolai, and his wife were living and then pulled up to the main house, which is shaped like a wide-open "V." The place, which they'd had built for them, was modern, airy, elegant—not something you see very often in Moscow, even now. If Natalia had told me that she had airlifted the house in from Aspen or Telluride, I might have believed her. Members of the old Politburo, including the notorious secret police chief Lavrenti Beria, used to live in the area. Natalia mentioned that Putin's prime minister was living a few doors down the road but was soon to move.

As we were walking toward the house, we saw Natalia's mother waving from a window. She is the same age as Solzhenitsyn, but her health, Natalia said, is better than her husband's. In recent years, Solzhenitsyn has had two heart attacks and suffers from intense back pain. Since coming home, he has continued working—short stories, prose poems, essays on other writers, political writing, as well as "Two Hundred Years Together"—but his energy, his urgency, is nothing like it had been. When he was writing "The Gulag Archipelago," he would make two writing days out of one: he would get up at 1 A.M. and work until nine; take a break and then work again until six, eat dinner, go to bed at 7 P.M., sleep till one, and then start again—all while expecting a knock on the door. He slept with a pitchfork near his bed.

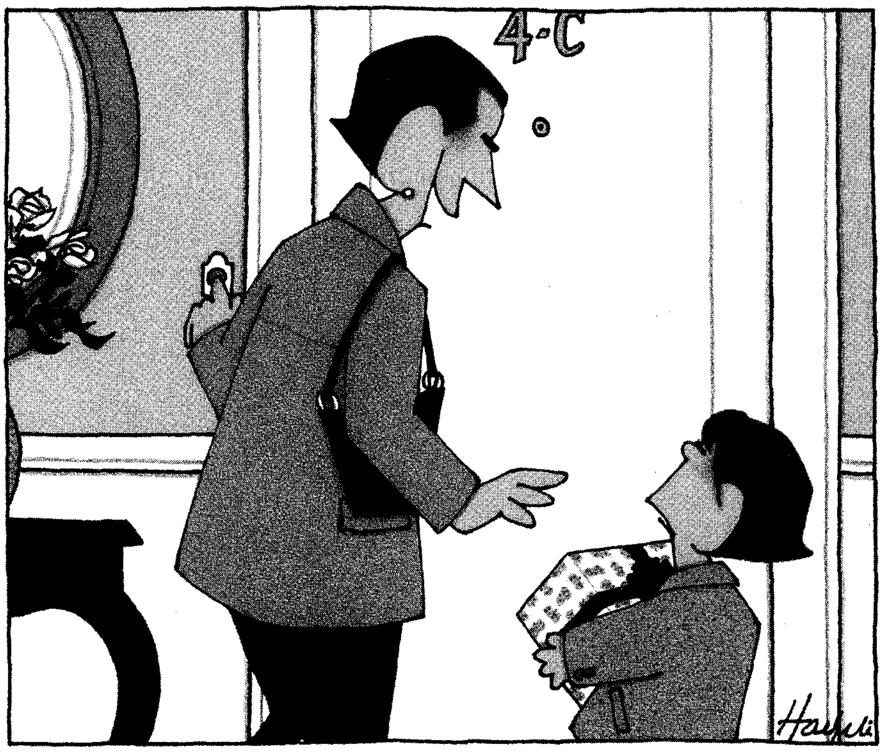
Natalia led us to a library, and Solzhenitsyn met us there. He looked much as he had when I first met him, in 1994—the same nineteenth-century beard and furrowed brow, the same safari jacket. But now he walked quite slowly and used a cane; he was more subdued in conversation, more likely to fall back on familiar nostrums. When I asked if he ever thought his work would be finished, he said, "This all depends on my health. If I'm still alive but bedridden, then I'll have to stop working, of course. But as long as I can move, even with the help of a cane, I'll go on working."

Every Soviet and Russian leader since Khrushchev has had a Solzhenitsyn strategy. For decades, it was repression; now it is seduction. Putin and his wife, Lyudmila, came calling last year, flowers in hand. Not long after that visit, I met Putin in New York and asked him about his time with Solzhenitsyn. "Oh, he had quite a lot of interesting ideas," he said blandly.

Now Solzhenitsyn was saying, "The meetings with Yeltsin and Putin were relatively brief and just once each, so it would be a mistake to make too much of my personal impressions. I watched Yeltsin, though, for ten years from afar, so I can judge him as a historical figure. I feel that Yeltsin permitted an enormous devastation of Russia. One might have imagined that things could not have got worse than the point to which Communism had brought us. It seemed that any effort at all would bring something better. On the contrary. Yeltsin managed to bring Russia even lower. He supported thieves. Our national riches and resources were privatized nearly for free, and even the new mobsters are not asked to pay any rent. The state has become a pauper.

"As for freedom of speech, that's the great achievement of Gorbachev and his policy of glasnost. Yeltsin just did not interfere in this process. As for the attack on the Communist Party, this also began before Yeltsin. From the end of the eighties, many Party functionaries fled their Party positions to join commercial concerns. They fled like cockroaches. So when Yeltsin came to power, the Communist Party no longer existed as a monolith. Yeltsin in his clash with the Supreme Soviet allowed state power to weaken, and then"—in October, 1993—"he rushed to another extreme, firing with tanks on the White House. The rest of the world did not call out loudly enough or reprimand him enough. He was considered a great champion of democracy even while he did this. And then Yeltsin established an autocratic regime. Democracy has not been established in Russia. Democracy has had no time to establish itself."

As for the current President, Solzhenitsyn said, "The first thing to ask is, Who put Putin into power? Yeltsin did it, with the help of [the notorious oligarch Boris] Berezovsky. To analyze this phenomenon of a K.G.B. man in power, you have to analyze how he came into power. If he had come into power as the result of a K.G.B. coup, it would have been one thing, but we had something else. I met Putin only once, and since then I've had no contacts. I got the impression of a businesslike person. . . .



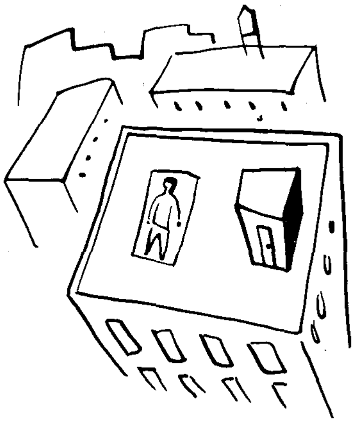
"You're old enough to learn how to work a party."

During our meeting, I made several suggestions, but he has followed none of them.”

Nearly thirty years ago, it became clear that Solzhenitsyn had a distinctly different opinion of the West than many other dissident thinkers. In speeches at Harvard and in front of the A.F.L.-C.I.O., Solzhenitsyn railed against the weakness and the naïveté of the West, attacked those who criticized the war in Vietnam, warned of godlessness and junk culture. Nothing that has happened since—not even the collapse of the Communist regime—has changed his mind about this.

“When the Iron Curtain was still standing, the cheapest fashions still made their way here: tawdry fashions, rock and roll, drugs, *popsa*—everything cheap, the cheapest possible things. When the Iron Curtain came down, the situation became even more complicated. It wasn’t only the manure that came through. There were many Western influences that came in, different qualities, different types of things, and I wouldn’t say all of them were negative. But my fellow-countrymen welcomed all of it with an open soul, everything! We thought a period of universal happiness would begin. Gorbachev, for example, and then Yeltsin withdrew our troops from Europe without any conditions. I’m now reading a memoir about how Gorbachev told the West, ‘Are you sure you won’t expand NATO to the east?’ And they answered, ‘Oh no, no no.’ It never occurred to Gorbachev to get a written document guaranteeing this. He just believed in their word and that was it. That was how we greeted the West. That’s how things started, in that spirit. Then we became extraordinarily disillusioned when we began to understand the arrogance, the real policies, of the Western powers.” In the seventies, Solzhenitsyn charged the West with weakness before the Soviet Union; now the West is too aggressive with Russia.

Solzhenitsyn’s new book is a peculiar one. For many years, he has had to face accusations of anti-Semitism. The reasons are complicated. His view of the world, shaped by an intense devotion to Russian patriotism, Russian suffering, and Russian Orthodoxy, is alien to many former dissidents, who have been quick to call him a hard-line nationalist, a tsarist, a Slavophile. What’s more, an intellectual like the mathematician Igor Shafarevich, who had once been allied with Solzhenitsyn, is, inarguably, anti-Semitic. In the seventies, some third-rate critics seemed to encounter his books with an accountant’s pencil, tallying “positive” and “negative” portraits of Jews, and sometimes found him wanting. Solzhenitsyn, in fact, is not anti-Semitic; his books are not anti-Semitic, and he is not, in his personal relations, anti-Jewish; Natalia’s mother is Jewish, and not a few of his friends are, too. It is true, however, that, as a Russian patriot, Solzhenitsyn has written of “the incomparable sufferings of our people,” and, as such, clearly does not believe in the uniqueness of Jewish suffering in the past two centuries or in the idea of the Jews as a symbol of persecution. Much of the new book is taken up with putting Jewish suffering into a wider context of Russian suffering; there is an insistent effort made to point out that the vast majority of the population, especially the serfs and then the peasantry, were deprived of their rights just like the Jews. Solzhenitsyn does not deny the persecution of Jews—the pogroms, the restrictions on university admissions, the general prejudice—but there is also a tendency to highlight any exaggeration of tsarist oppression or to measure Jewish suffering against the sorry state of nearly all Russians. In his text, Solzhenitsyn often seems irritated that there is a “taboo” against discussing “the Jewish question,” that one must either endorse certain notions of Jewish history and suffering or risk being branded a bigot. And yet, even as he describes and condemns the large number of Jews who took part in the revolutionary movement against the tsar, he is quick to disavow “conspiracies” and blames Russians and Russian failures—from the “arrogance of the nobility” to the “abandonment” of the peasantry—for the Revolutions of 1905 and 1917. “The highest circles of St. Petersburg nonetheless succumbed to the seductively simple explanation that Russia was in no way organically diseased, and that the whole Revolution was nothing but a vicious Jewish plot, part and parcel of the worldwide Judeo-Masonic conspiracy. There was one explanation for it all: the Jews!” he writes in “Two Hundred Years Together,” and goes on to say that, in fact, “it was our own Russian weaknesses that determined our sorry history’s downward vector.”



This is a serious subject with a gigantic literature, but it is puzzling that, at this point in his life, Solzhenitsyn decided to take on a two-volume history. Beyond his classics—“One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich” and the three volumes of “Gulag”—there are books in Solzhenitsyn’s œuvre that are arguably dull or minor but never tangential. “The Red Wheel” is marred by long, wooden passages and artificial-sounding dialogue, yet there is no doubt about its intent and ambition; Solzhenitsyn set out to write a cycle that would encompass nearly everything that led to the Russian Revolution. “Two Hundred Years Together” seems anomalous, not at all essential. He considers it a scholarly work and is quite proud that there are hundreds of footnotes. In fact, he ignores most contemporary scholarship. Could it possibly be that, at his age, he wanted to write this to rebuff the old attacks?

“For fifty-four years, I was working on ‘The Red Wheel,’ from 1936 to 1990,” Solzhenitsyn said. “And during that time I came across many facts and points of view about Russian history beginning in the nineteenth century until now. There were various themes I came across which were subsidiary to ‘The Red Wheel.’ One of them, not the only one, was the theme of the common life of Russians and Jews. This theme would emerge now and then and become a topic of discussion in earlier years, so from decade to decade this theme has accompanied my work on ‘The Red Wheel.’ I felt it should be treated in its

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way, but if I had included it in 'The Red Wheel' it would have created a wrong accent. It would have looked like an attempt to explain the Revolution because of the interference of the Jews." He dismissed the idea that he was responding to "criticism."

"Criticism is a balanced judgment, and this wasn't that. In this case, there were just groundless, fantastical attacks, and I could only answer with surprise. Why was 'Ivan Denisovich' accused of being anti-Semitic? Well, it's because one of the characters, Tsezar Markovich, worked in an office instead of laying bricks. The prototype of Tsezar Markovich, Lev Grossman, was a lifelong friend of mine. There was a lot of this rubbish."

Officially sanctioned anti-Semitism in Russia, for all its historical resonance—especially for the children and grandchildren of Russian-Jewish immigrants—has virtually disappeared. In his book and in conversation, Solzhenitsyn readily acknowledged the presence and persistence of anti-Semitism among many Russians, but he also was quick to add that he had felt the sting of anti-Russian prejudice. "There is a lot of it. Radio programs on Radio Liberty, where you would hear the most contemptible and denigrating programs—these were often Russian Jews, and Russians were spoken of as *Untermenschen*."

After a while, Solzhenitsyn seemed tired, and I turned the subject to perhaps the most painful one. I asked him if he thought that the new order of things in Russia had diminished his moral authority, and whether that might even be a good thing, as Lev Timofeyev had suggested.

Solzhenitsyn looked down at the table and thought this over awhile. Then he said, "I know from the many personal letters I still get that for many people I am a source of trust and moral authority. But I cannot really say if I am a moral authority or not. I do feel that for humanity—not society but for humanity—moral authority is a necessity. The course of world history and world culture shows us that there are, and should be, moral authorities. They constitute a kind of spiritual hierarchy which is absolutely necessary for every individual. In the twentieth century, the universal tendency, not only in the West but everywhere, was to destroy any hierarchies so that everyone could act just as he or she wants without regarding any moral authority. This has already been reflected in, and has influenced, the whole of world culture, and the level of world culture has been lowered as a result."

Solzhenitsyn let me know that my visit was drawing to a close.

"I'm not working with the old speed," he said. "My workday is different, because once or twice a day I stop to take a rest. I never used to do that. And in the evening I feel tired and go to bed fairly early. In the morning, I feel strong, but this strength doesn't last as long as it used to. It's hard to walk, even to stand. I have to use that cane over there. I have some problems with my spine, so even sitting is a problem now." One of the prose poems he has written since his return to Moscow is called "Growing Old":

> How much easier it is then, how much more receptive we are to death, when advancing years guide us softly to our end. Aging thus is in no sense a punishment from on high, but brings its own blessings and a warmth of colors all its own. . . . There is even warmth to be drawn from the waning of your own strength compared with the past—just to think how sturdy I once used to be! You can no longer get through a whole day's work at a stretch, but how good it is to slip into the brief oblivion of sleep, and what a gift to wake once more to the clarity of your second or third morning of the day. And your spirit can find delight in limiting your intake of food, in abandoning the pursuit of novel flavors. You are still of this life, yet you are rising above the material plane. . . . Growing old serenely is not a downhill path but an ascent.

When he was a younger man, always under assault from the authorities, Solzhenitsyn used to take breaks and pace, like an infantryman, back and forth, in the woods. He viewed his writing life as a war waged against tyranny, and he viewed himself, he always said, as a soldier. And so I asked him now if he still saw himself that way, as a soldier in writer's clothing. Solzhenitsyn smiled, something he does not do very often or easily with visitors.

"No," he said. "It doesn't feel like that any longer." Then we said our goodbyes, and he slowly got out of his chair, took up his cane, and went to another room to lie down. ♦

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ANNALS OF GASTRONOMY

FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD!

The British are becoming more picky about what they eat.

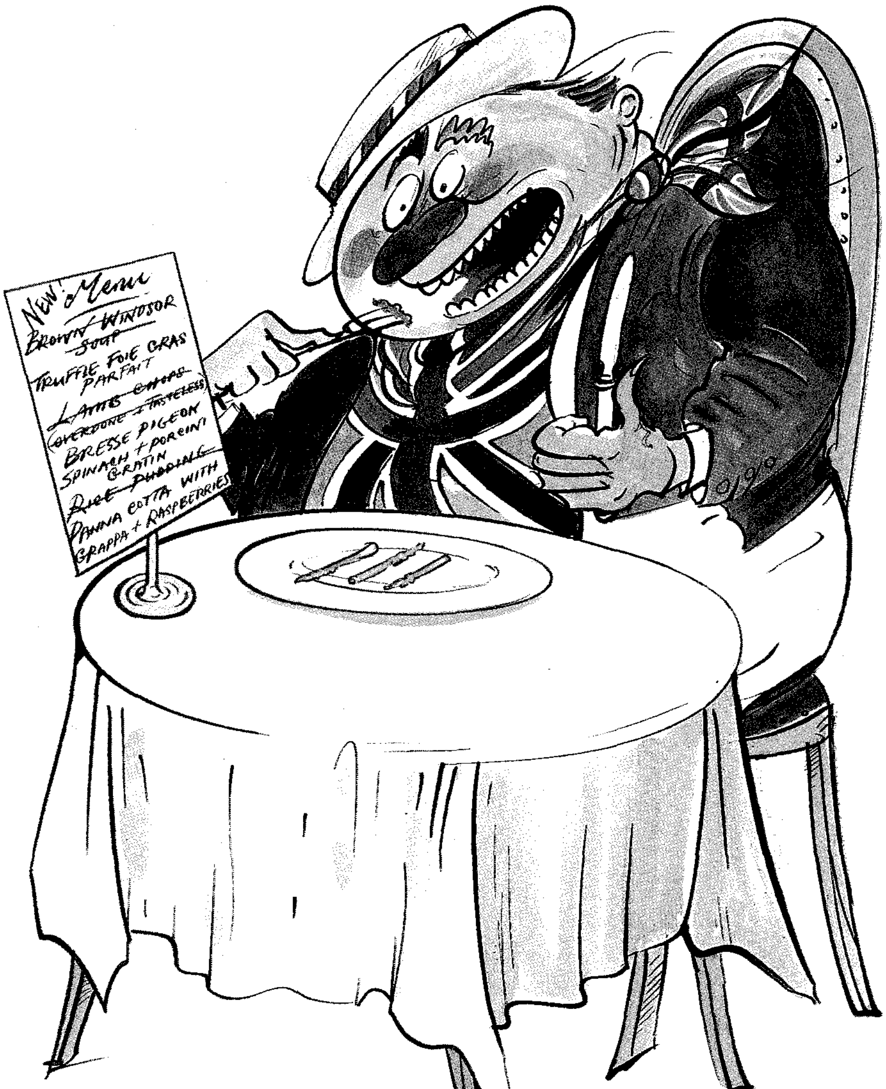
BY REBECCA MEAD

The British cow has suffered terrible image problems in the past few years, owing to the fright of bovine spongiform encephalopathy, and the blight, last winter, of foot-and-mouth disease. Yet at Borough Food Market, which takes place every Friday and Saturday in Southeast London, cattle are objects of reverence. There are, however, no actual cows at Borough. The marketplace is appropriately dank and rough-hewn—a cavernous yard underneath the arches of a commuter-train track—but it is not the kind of market to which cows come, except in the form of extremely high-end hot dogs. These can be bought from a stand, and behind a sizzling grill hangs the Northfield Farm sign, which promises that the meat is all "rare breed," and features an illustration—a portrait, really—of a cow's face, with intelligent, knowing eyes. The cow in the picture gazes at you, establishing a rapport that will be consummated only when the sausage goes into your mouth. It would seem almost Hindu, if it weren't for the eating part.

Borough Food Market is the place Londoners mention when they want to make the argument that the English have started to care about cooking. It's Dean & Deluca meets Hunts Point, and it is thronged, on a typical Saturday afternoon, with the Gucci-sunglasses-and-flip-flops brigade, Londoners with great hair and ever-increasing property values. There's a foie-gras stall, with tasting spoons at the ready. There's a stand entirely devoted to the ostrich: ostrich filets, ostrich pepper steaks, ostrich burgers. There are stalls where you can sample half a dozen different olive oils, and a stall that sells nothing but garlic from the Isle of Wight. A chocolatier offers tastes of candies with adventurous flavor combinations, like caramel and salt. You can find a zillion different kinds of organic mushroom, laid out in baskets, like a fungal Citarella window. There are so many baby vegetables for sale that you wonder whether any vegetables have been left in the ground to see adulthood. At lunchtime, a long line forms at a stand that sells coal-grilled-chorizo-and-arugula sandwiches, even though the English don't know how to pronounce "chorizo."

To suggest that the English have become obsessed with food seems, at first, like perversity, on a level with proposing that the French have developed a national predilection for celibacy, or that the Japanese can't stop talking about their feelings. Of course, shoppers at Borough Food Market buying their Joselito ham—it comes from Iberian wild pigs raised on acorns in dappled sunlight, according to the pigs' handsomely produced brochure—are the more militant variety. Affluent Londoners may patronize Borough, or they might go to a long-established butcher's like Lidgate's, in Holland Park, another center of urban cow-worship, where a sign in the window advertises the farmers' commitment to "respectful husbandry befitting these noble animals, giving them the freedom to browse as well as to graze," as if the farm were a high-end spa.

Still, even ordinary British citizens are being more careful these days about



There are farmers' markets, restaurants to rival those of Paris, even celebrity chefs.

GERALD SCARFE

"Whoa! Move over, Thoreau."

what they put in their mouths. Farmers' markets, selling local or regional produce, are starting to spring up all over the country. In the past several years, consumers have been able to go to food fairs at stately country homes, where they can sample specialty products from local farmers and indulge in the strangely British masochism of seeing how the grand folks up on the hill live. (Unlike Americans, who visit the homes of the wealthy in a spirit of aspirational pleasure, the English do so with a lingering sense of serfdom.) The major supermarkets, where the British do sixty per cent of their food shopping, offer vast sections devoted to specialty imported goods—spiced pestos from Morocco, toasted-pumpkin-seed oil from Austria, and, that metric of modernity, an infinity of different olive oils. For the past few years, global gourmands have been arguing that the restaurants in London are now better than the restaurants in Paris. There are even celebrity chefs. Food has become *interesting*. Recently, the gossip column of London's *Evening Standard*, which is usually devoted to the tawdry comings and goings of minor nobles and pop stars, featured an item headlined "CHEESE SHORTAGE PREDICTED FOR CHRISTMAS," in which a person described as "Britain's only Master of Cheese" warned that the country is facing "a cheese catastrophe." It was the lead story.

All this would hardly be worthy of note—"FINE MEAL AVAILABLE IN INTERNATIONAL CAPITAL CITY" doesn't sound like news—were it not for the historic awfulness of the English diet. Anyone over the age of thirty-five can remember when olive oil was something you bought in a pharmacy (it's good for getting wax out of your ears, apparently), and English children are still raised to enjoy a range of foodstuffs that are more or less inedible. These include such offerings as the chip butty (French fries between slices of white bread) and perplexing toppings for toast, like canned spaghetti and baked beans and Marmite, a black, salty, yeasty spread that causes gagging in foreign nationals.

If you ask London food professionals why the English are gourmandizing, you'll get various interpretations of the national character. Henrietta Green, a cookbook writer and an advocate for farmers' markets, told me that the English were beginning to be educated about food, although they still had a long way to go. "If you go shopping with a French consumer and an English consumer, the French one wants to be tempted, engaged, persuaded that this is the most wonderful piece of brie," Green said. "The English shopper is much more skeptical, thinking, Why the hell should I pay two or three pounds for this cheddar? They never make the equation that if you pay something extra you are getting something better."

Green is an energetic woman of middle years, with dark-brown bobbed hair and ample proportions. We met for lunch at Clarke's, on Kensington Church Street, one of the best of the London restaurants that serve local ingredients. (It's owned and run by Sally Clarke, who trained in California and was inspired by Chez Panisse.) I ordered Scottish smoked salmon and crème fraîche, and Green had grilled squab with pancetta and apricots and bitter greens. She had meringue with cherries for dessert, and I had cheese and oatmeal crackers. "In these environmentally correct and politically correct times, people are more concerned about food," she said, gnawing on a squab leg. "Food miles—the number of miles it takes for a food to get to marketplace—are very important. One kilo of asparagus from California uses four kilos of aviation fuel to get here." She cracked her squab bones with her teeth, and wiped her plate clean. "Food is like fashion," she said. "If you look at fashions, they are cyclical, and the thing that really moves something on is a new technical development. There isn't all that much you can do—and then, all of a sudden, Lycra is invented. But then there is a reversal, and everyone wants a hundred-per-cent linen. For a long time, there wasn't all that much you could do with food—and then, suddenly, there were planes that could bring us every kind of food every day of the week. We can fly strawberries in from Peru. We can farm the desert. And then there is the reversal. And right now, in terms of food, we're having a linen moment."

This might also be described as a cashmere moment in English cooking, cashmere being the favorite fabric of Nigella Lawson, who is currently Britain's most celebrated television cook, and whose voluptuous form, clad in tight Tse separates, has attracted as much attention as her way with a rack of lamb. British television is jammed with gastrotainment: almost every evening, in prime time, viewers can tune in and watch one host or another bustling about a handsome kitchen while brandishing an olive pitter or lathering elbow-deep in an organic turkey. Gary Rhodes, the host of a televised amateur bake-off contest called "Master Chef," has a head of spiky hair identical to that which the violinist Nigel Kennedy used to wear, for similar branding purposes; Ainsley Harriott, who now hosts a cheesy game-show/cooking hybrid called "Ready Steady Cook" (and its spinoff, "Celebrity Ready Steady Cook"), is tall, black, and particularly gifted at chatting up post-menopausal women.

At a level of celebrity equivalent to that enjoyed by David Beckham or Geri Halliwell is Jamie Oliver, "The Naked Chef." (He's already on the Food Network in the United States.) Oliver is a twenty-six-year-old alumnus of the River Café, one of the best restaurants in London, who has been transformed by television into a puckish kitchen pinup: he's scruffy yet cute, with straggly hair that is decades away from receding. He's unthreatening and friendly, even if he does lay on the Cockney patois as thick as marmalade, helping to extend the reach of such terms as "lovely-jubbly" and "pukka" well beyond their natural boundaries. "The Naked Chef," so-called because the recipes are stripped down, was one of the first cooking shows to offer a life style rather than a set of handy instructions: Oliver is seen charging around London's markets and fishmongers on his motorbike, sliding down the bannister of the spiral staircase of his house in the City, and having a bunch of his pukka mates over for dinner. (He has recently fallen afoul of some serious London food types, who object to his doing commercials for Sainsbury's, the supermarket chain; this is viewed as a betrayal of culinary principles, like Dylan going electric.) Oliver is credited in England with making cooking cool for the New Lad, that soccer-loving, Ecstasy-eating, *Maxim*-reading hormonal mess of a creature, although it is equally possible that his show's success lies in giving middle-aged women license to spend half an hour watching an attractive young man poking cuts of raw meat with his fingers or pummelling his pestle into his mortar.

Nigella Lawson's program, "Nigella Bites," is the show of the moment in England, however. (It will be shown in America on the E! network this fall.) Lawson is not a trained cook; she's a newspaper columnist with a lot of influential relatives. Her father, Nigel, was Margaret Thatcher's chancellor; her brother, Dominic, is the editor of the *Sunday Telegraph;* her late husband, John Diamond, was one of the most celebrated journalists in England—for nearly four years, he wrote a column for the *Times* about having throat cancer. (The column became a book, a television documentary, a stage play, and a TV drama.)

Lawson, who is forty-one and has two children, has long, dark hair and pale skin and a brilliant makeup person; she looks like a cross between Anna Nicole Smith and a young Susan Sontag. As she is stirring a bowl of chocolate cake batter—her manicured hands are usually photographed at the level of her chest—she will say things like "You are not talking strenuous exercise, but you are talking deep, deep pleasure," and the show is punctuated with images of her licking pork fat off her fingers or digging into a dish of mashed potatoes the minute they're finished. The joke going around is that the series should be called "Nigella Swallows."

I met Lawson for lunch at the River Café, where she pointed out, over pork loin and chard, that she has a highly developed sense of camp and irony. This would be a fine explanation of her show's naughtiness were it not that everything in England is camp and ironic. (Irony is where the English begin, just as the French begin with insouciance or the Americans with earnestness.) Her transformation from journalist to celebrity—she's been on the cover of everything from the middlebrow *Mail on Sunday's* magazine to the *New Statesman*, Britain's leftist equivalent of *The New Republic*—is, she theorized, due in part to the public awareness of her private life. "The world loves a girl who has suffered," she said. "I don't mind pity—I love pity—but I find other people's need for me to be tragic very wearing."

Cooking programs like hers, Lawson suggested, appeal to something elemental, although she did not propose the same elemental thing that many of her commentators seem to focus on. "I think human beings have a fantasy about transformation of the self," she said. "Food is like that: you are transforming something by cooking it. And you are watching television thinking you might transform yourself into someone who might do that." Men like her because she is, as she puts it, "posh totty" while also being warmly maternal. Lawson is a Jewish mother, no less, although she's the kind of

THOS. MOSER
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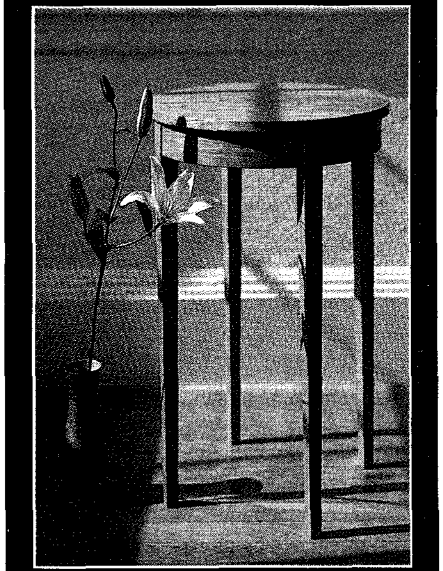

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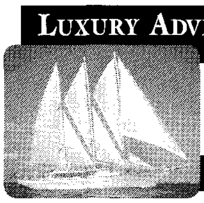

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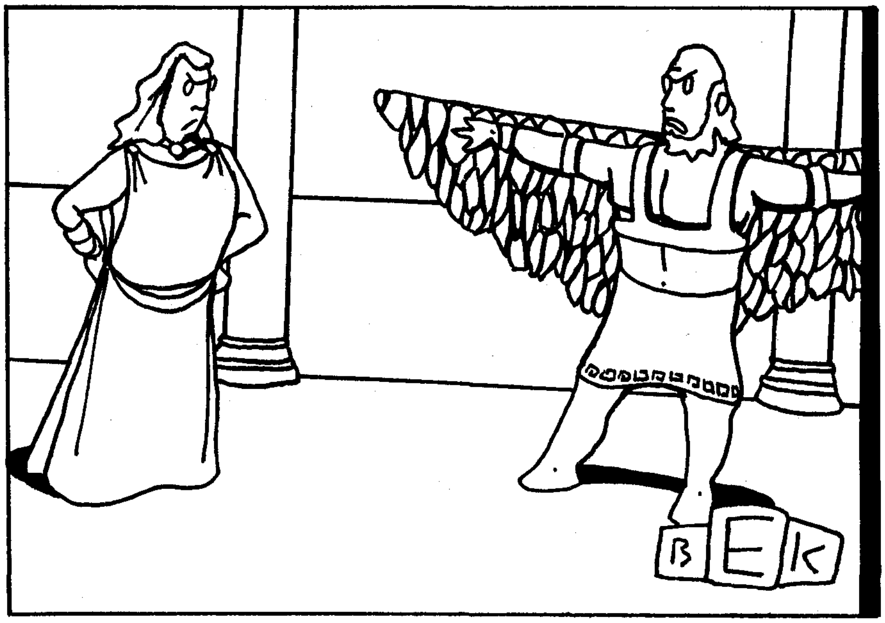
Jew who grew up eating ham for Christmas dinner.

Women like her, too, and this is because Lawson, as well as being gorgeous and having the panache to wear gold mules with feather trim around the house, is also vulnerable, and prone to putting on weight, which is something women always appreciate in other women. All that licking of fingers has something desperate about it; the show usually closes with a scene of Nigella creeping into her kitchen in her silk dressing gown and scarfing down mouthfuls of whatever she cooked on the show that day. It looks a bit pathological. Lawson gained fourteen pounds during the filming of the present series, and the director instituted a weekly weigh-in for the whole team. ("The sound man and I were neck and neck for a while, but I tore ahead at the end," Lawson says.) That must be a heartening statistic to many female viewers, although not to those who might actually try to cook anything she proposes.

Learning to cook is not really the point of Lawson's show, just as MTV does not exist to teach viewers how to play electric guitar. Cooking instruction is still provided on British television, however, by Delia Smith. If Lawson is the Princess Diana of the kitchen—glamorous, tragic, and endlessly hungry—then Delia Smith is the Queen: straitlaced, reliable, and chilly. She's sold millions of books; it would take a peasants' revolt or an act of Parliament to get rid of her. (In fact, Smith turned down a peerage a few years ago, saying she was too busy.) Smith has been on TV for nearly thirty years, but her view of the culinary capacities of her countrypeople are those of a reproving schoolteacher. In a celebrated episode of the show, "Delia's How to Cook Part One," Smith demonstrated the correct way to boil an egg. "Cooking was taken out of the schools curriculum in England," she told me. "My latest book is dedicated to the young people of Britain—it's for them." Smith gets quite exercised about the way other television hosts eat. "I have a no-tasting rule," she says. "I hate that. I can't bear anybody putting anything in their mouth. I think it is naff and awful. They can't speak while they are eating; and then, if they do speak, it is always the same thing—'Oh, delicious,' 'Oh, yummy.' Yuck."

A cooking-show host who is disgusted by eating is, in a way, perfect for Britain, since the gastronomic fantasies promoted by television and the supermarket aisles have been accompanied by a succession of food scares: mad-cow disease, swine fever, genetically modified foods, and this year's foot-and-mouth disaster, during which acres and acres of English countryside have been closed for business and three and a half million animals have been slaughtered. Foot-and-mouth struck during the wettest twelve months on record, which added to the national gloom; in a new book about the crisis, "The End of British Farming," Andrew O'Hagan provides an impressive range of meteorological descriptions, all of which a less ambitious writer would have rendered as "It was raining." (O'Hagan's book is not the only one about the agricultural crisis: a current best-seller, "The Great Food Gamble"—"essential for anyone who cares about themselves or the future," the cover asserts, which leaves only psychopaths and the severely depressed outside its purview—is by a well-known BBC news presenter named John Humphrys. It's as if Tom Brokaw had written about cows instead of the Greatest Generation.) In this context, watching sensuous television about beating eggs with cream and butter serves as an excellent displacement activity. It's a lot safer than eating.

The most perceptible reaction to the food scares is the rise in sales of organic foods, which have increased fifty-five per cent in 1999-2000—a rate that alarms organic-food producers and small distributors in Britain, like Thoby Young, who runs the Fresh Food Co, an organic-food delivery service. He told me, "Whatever else it is, that growth is not organic. It has much more in common with a beef calf that is pumped up with steroids and hormones to gain maximum weight." The real troublemakers, most independent food distributors would argue, are the big supermarket chains, which sell about three quarters of the nation's organic food. The flagship branch of Sainsbury's, on the Cromwell Road, offers aisles and aisles of organic foods: meats, vegetables, eggs, and milk, but also more creative organic offerings catering to the traditional tastes of the British, such as organic chocolate bars and organic gin. Supermarkets are the perennial villain in most British food narratives: when Sainsbury's announced, earlier this year, that it was going into partnership with farmers in Grenada to meet the demand for organic produce, the *Guardian* made the venture sound like an invasion far grander and more sinister than Reagan's 1983 adventure. Andrew O'Hagan's book is an anti-supermarket jeremiad; the "multiples,"



"Why do you automatically assume that I'll fly too close to the sun?"

as they are known, are the opposite of food sanctuaries like Borough market. At one point, O'Hagan visits a Devon farm that produces yogurt which had been described to him by the Sainsbury's public-relations people as the kind of small-scale, high-quality venture the store wished to encourage; the farm in question, he discovers, is cattle-free. "I was absolutely delighted when we managed to get rid of the very last cow off this farm," the farmer tells him. "That's the thing about cows, you know, they just poo all the time."

The only food person I met who had anything good to say about supermarkets was Nina Planck. She is a thirty-year-old American living in London, where she launched the capital's first farmers' market, in 1999, and now runs ten of them. "The supermarkets have delivered great variety, and great choice, and great prices," she told me, when we met in a Soho restaurant one evening. "They have given the consumers something they wanted, and now the consumers are blaming them for it." Planck has been in the U.K. for five years, which is long enough not to be surprised by such a reaction. She was raised on a farm in Virginia, though she is the kind of farm girl who went to work for Dick Gephardt when he was House majority leader, and most recently was a speechwriter for the American Ambassador to Great Britain. (She plans to return to the United States later this year to launch a political career.) She's very media-friendly, which in England means that she provides facts, figures, and anecdotes, and also tends, at her interview appointments, to arrive early and have an open bottle of wine on the table when the reporter gets there.

Planck is regarded with skepticism by some members of the London culinary community, their ostensible objection being that her farmers' markets cast too wide a net: she allows anyone who lives within a hundred miles beyond the M25, the freeway that encircles Greater London, to sell in her markets; purists say the venders shouldn't travel more than forty miles. But there's also an element of understated resentment at this very young, very slender outsider telling locals how to run the show: "the American," she is called, as if she were the sole ambassador of bad Hollywood movies, McDonald's, and 'N Sync. Planck, who is currently taping her own television cooking program, is as evangelical about free markets as she is about greenmarkets. "A year ago, we had almost no lettuce in the markets," she said. "Now most of our vegetable growers are doing mixed salad. That is how quickly they respond when they are under the pressure of market forces, and there is a magic in that."

With choice comes responsibility; now that the British have access to the best of the world's food and the finest their own country has to offer, the important thing, food experts feel, is that they learn what to do with this bounty. It is possible, of course, that, even though the English are now able to buy goat cheese and radicchio, the native taste bud will revert to type. A look at the contents of a Marks & Spencer sandwich case, which might hold such an abomination as crab-flavored seafood pieces in cocktail sauce on oatmeal bread, suggests that some degree of reversion is inevitable.

Still, the vanguard continues the process of reëducation. After I had lunch with Nigella Lawson at the River Café, I called Ruth Rogers, the co-owner of the restaurant, and discussed the importance of seasonal food, as it is outlined in the restaurant's most recent cookbook, "River Café Green." The book consists of twelve chapters, one for each month, containing market-specific recipes; a reader should never, ever flip to September and make figs baked with crème fraîche when it is still only March and she should be making sea kale with lemon and pecorino romano. "We are urging people not to be seduced by the choice of raspberries in February," Rogers said, sternly. In a perfect Britain, all eating would be like lunch at the River Café on a sunny summer's day: the pork would be organic, the scallops would taste of the ocean, the Thames would sparkle, and so would Nigella Lawson, and—but for the absence of Jamie Oliver in the kitchen—all would be delicious and perfect. Rogers, by the way, said that she hasn't served beef or offal for three years, because of B.S.E., but she was thinking that she might reintroduce it to the menu. The cows will be honored to be included. ♦

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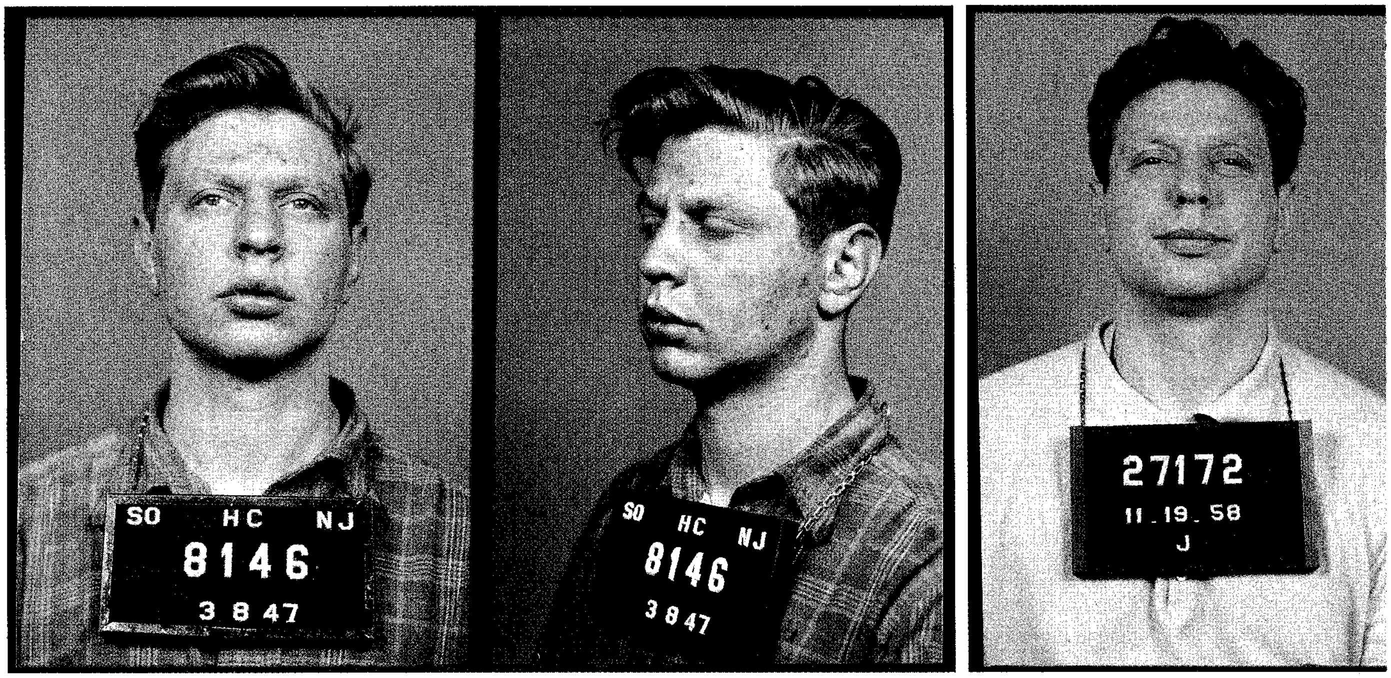
PERSONAL HISTORY

BLOOD RELATION

One day, he got a call from the uncle nobody wanted to talk about.

BY ERIC KONIGSBERG



Harold Konigsberg, a loan shark and a contract killer for the Mob, was believed to have been responsible for upward of twenty homicid

This is how my family made its money. In May, 1955, my grandfather Leo Konigsberg started a wholesale food business in Bayonne, New Jersey: one delivery route, one driver, and two trucks. He added an afternoon route and drove it himself, dropping in on his high-volume customers—grocery stores and restaurants—to see if anyone was running low and needed something on the spot. That was what Leo liked most about being a butter-and-egg man, getting out and seeing clients.

At first, Leo ran his business out of his home, storing nonperishables—pickles, mayonnaise, and shortening—in his garage, and perishables in two walk-in coolers he rented in Jersey City. In time, he was able to pay his father rent on a space he used as a warehouse and office. As he frequently reminded his children, the only free thing he ever accepted from his relatives was a driveway for his trucks. He built a successful outfit, and if you drove through Hudson County in the nineteen-sixties or seventies you probably saw the red trucks with "Leo L. Konigsberg Foods" lettered in cursive across the front.

Leo was fanatical about his reputation. Everyone knew he wouldn't accept goods that had fallen off a truck. If he ate in a customer's diner, he refused to take a cup of coffee on the house, even if it embarrassed his host. He was consumed by the anxiety of having to demonstrate his uprightness.

One night in 1958, Leo returned from his route and was met in his office by three men; two of them had stockings over their faces and one shoved a crowbar into his ribs. They made him open his safe, which had more than two thousand dollars inside, then tied him up. The police who arrived on the scene afterward gave Leo a hard time, "as though he were the one who'd done something wrong," my grandmother recalls. Leo had never once stayed home from work, but he spent the next day in bed, sick to his stomach. What upset him most was the headline in the Bayonne *Times:* "KONIGSBERG'S BROTHER VICTIM OF SAFE ROBBERY."

Internal memos from the United States Department of Justice allege that Leo's baby brother, Harold (Kayo) Konigsberg, committed more than twenty homicides in the service of organized crime; some of his acquaintances put the total at more than fifty. "For years, police and federal agents considered the hulking Kayo the most dangerous uncaged killer on the East Coast," *Life* reported in August of 1968. It quoted a government official who described him as "an animal on a leash" for the Mafia and said, "All they had to do was unsnap the leash and he'd kill for the fun of it." An accompanying photograph showed three officers clutching at Harold's jacket, fighting to prop up his head for a booking. In the picture, he appears to weigh upward of two-fifty. He has wavy, dark-blond hair and a face like a veal cutlet. He looks at peace.

NYC MUNICIPAL ARCHIVES (3)

Unlike a typical Mafia contract killer, who answers to a hierarchy of bosses, Harold was freelance and would work for whatever family had hired him. People who came into contact with him—prosecutors, detectives, defense lawyers, underworld figures—reach for the same oxymoronic superlatives: "smartest hit man" and "toughest Jew" (this a generation after the Jews had got out of the business, or, at least, like Meyer Lansky, limited their activities to the white-collar end). The Justice Department considered him the king of all loan sharks; conducting business out of a half-dozen offices in midtown Manhattan and in Jersey, he claimed to have a million dollars on the street at any given time. He taught himself to read as an adult, he said, and he served as his own lawyer in two major trials. Later, he wrote many of his own appeals, one of which got as far as the United States Supreme Court. The amount of time and energy he spent thwarting the government once he was locked up was perhaps what was most unusual about Harold. The story of this mutual antagonism is a window on not just his criminal mind but also the Feds' tender-footed efforts to fight the Mafia in the sixties, the beginnings of a battle that lasted thirty years.

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Ie was my first true sociopath, and brilliant, brilliant, brilliant," one of his lawyers says. "But he could be just adorable."

The event that set in motion Harold's undoing occurred in 1961. That winter, a power struggle within the Local 560 chapter of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters pitted a reform-minded faction called the Green Ticket against the union president, Anthony (Tony Pro) Provenzano, who had been extorting money from member companies and issuing sweetheart contracts. When Tony Pro suspected that the Green Ticket was promoting the chapter's popular secretary-treasurer, Anthony Castellito, to run against him for president, he decided to have Castellito killed.

Tony Pro had a lot at stake. Local 560—headquartered, appropriately enough, in Union City, New Jersey—had thirteen thousand members (mostly truckers) and was one of the most influential labor locals in the country. He had a yearly income of around a hundred thousand dollars (which put him up there with his mentor, the Teamsters International president, Jimmy Hoffa), and he had designs on skimming another two hundred and fifty thousand dollars from the union treasury if reëlected.

In his spare time, Tony Pro was a *caporegime*, a Mafia lieutenant, in the Genovese crime family, so assembling a team to carry out the murder was easy. Harold came first, followed by Salvatore (Sally Bugs) Briguglio, a Genovese soldier. Sally Bugs was trim, wore glasses, and had served a hitch in the Army. Salvatore (Big Sal) Sinno, a bookmaker in Hoboken, joined them. Big Sal was six feet three, had a Roman nose and a pompadour, and had spent time working as Tony Pro's bodyguard. Tony Pro offered Harold fifteen thousand dollars for Castellito's murder, and both he and Big Sal were promised some of Tony Pro's take from the union. Sally Bugs, for his payment, was going to be employed as a business agent of the Local 560—a guaranteed position on the Teamsters' gravy train.

The plan was to ambush Castellito at his country house, in Kerhonkson, New York, about two hours north of Manhattan. Around 9 A.M. on June 5th, Castellito parked his car near the Local 560 building and was approached by Big Sal. According to court testimony and F.B.I. interviews with some of the principals, Big Sal told Castellito that Tony Pro had a friend who was on the lam from authorities. As a favor to Tony Pro, Big Sal asked, could he let the lamster hide out at his farmhouse for a few days?

Castellito agreed; he was eager to appear friendly toward Tony Pro, and he was sympathetic to life on the wrong side of the law. He himself had made money off illegal gambling and shylocking. He and Big Sal picked up the purported lamster—actually a longtime enforcer for Harold—and they headed north on the New York State Thruway.

In photographs, Castellito's retreat suggests the Mob pastoral ideal: prefab, with a screened-in flagstone porch and a long driveway separated from the road by a chain. "We had a hundred and forty-eight acres, seven horses," says his son, Anthony, Jr., who was twenty-six at the time. "My father liked to cut the grass and bale hay. He loved that better than coming into Jersey City with his Cadillac."

Harold and Sally Bugs were hiding inside Castellito's house. When Castellito came in through the kitchen, Sally Bugs immediately struck him on the back of the head with a piece of lead-filled hose. It wasn't enough to knock him out, and he fought back. So Harold strode to the porch and ripped a length of cord from the venetian blinds. Sally Bugs and Big Sal drew it around Castellito's neck and pulled. In a minute, it was over. Harold buried Castellito's corpse some hundred and forty miles away, outside of Freehold Township, New Jersey, near a dumping ground.

Harold went to Tony Pro's office a week later. By way of an alibi, Tony Pro had flown to West Palm Beach and married his girlfriend on the day of the hit. Now Harold threw an arm around him and kissed his cheek.

"Very good," Tony Pro said. He handed Harold an envelope.

The same week, state authorities questioned Harold and Tony Pro about the disappearance, but found them unhelpful. A search of Castellito's property turned up no promising clues, and the case was left unsolved.

Over the next several months, Tony Pro was comfortably reëlected president of Local 560 but never gave Big Sal the payoff he'd promised. Soon, Big Sal went missing and was presumed dead.

Tony Pro seemed to be embarking on a cleanup operation. He withheld Harold's piece of the union profits, too, and in December, 1962, set a trap for him at the Cabana Club in North Bergen, New Jersey (one of many clubs and hotels that Harold had taken over in lieu of loan payments). Upon entering, Harold could see Sally Bugs peering out from behind a curtain and Tony Pro's brother behind the bar. Instead of retreating, he tore through the kitchen, pulled a stove out of the wall, and barricaded the door. Tony Pro's boys tried to coax Harold out, begging him to talk things over, but for five hours he wouldn't budge. Peering through a barred window, he eventually saw an insurance man he knew, and persuaded him to pry the bars open with a tire iron. As Harold fled, Tony Pro's crew started firing. He was hit, but he flagged down a passing motorist and paid him twenty dollars for a ride home.

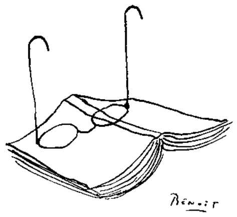
According to one of my grandaunts, Harold's mother-in-law was visiting. "Come upstairs," he told his wife, and when he took off his sports jacket she saw that his shirt was soaked with blood. He was taken to a safe house, where a Mob doctor extracted four bullets and thirteen buckshot pellets from his body.

Before long, the Mafia's higher-ups declared Harold off limits; his services were too valuable to lose. Blessed with plenty of other Mob contacts, he went on with his work. And for a long time he did not give another thought to the body outside Freehold Township.

My granduncle's life is something my family went to considerable lengths to conceal. I first heard of him from a groundskeeper at my boarding school who had once been a policeman in New York. I tried bragging about my discovery to my classmates but received blank stares, and I did not mention it again. Then, in 1995, I was researching a story on a murder case when a former detective asked if I was related to "the famous Konigsberg." I'd forgotten about Kayo long before and assumed he meant Woody Allen.

I telephoned my father. "That's my Uncle Heshy," he said. "Please tell me you said you weren't related. Why would you want your name—our family name—attached to someone like that?" He told me to drop the assignment and never to write about the Mafia.

My father said that Heshy wasn't really part of our family, which—as far as something to identify with—consisted only of my parents, my brother, and me. I was six years old when my father completed his surgical residency and we moved from New York to Omaha, Nebraska. Still, I was surprised by his reaction. Our family is as generic as Midwestern Jews come, and I'd never heard him use a grand-sounding expression like "our family name." I felt a detached thrill to know we had a criminal in the family, but I didn't expect others to see it that way, and I haven't brought myself to tell most of my friends. Early on, my feelings alternated between perverse pride and something not quite its opposite.



One night in 1997, I received a voice mail:

> Well, I'm not gonna give you a message. . . . Tomorrow's another day. If you're home between eight and eight-thirty, you'll get a surprise. I'll call you, we'll talk, we'll have a nice conversation, and you'll have something to talk to your father and your brother about. And I'm telling you it's a very, very interesting conversation, Mr. Konigsberg. That's your name, ain't it?

My father confirmed that it was Heshy's voice. Heshy had apparently learned that he had a journalist for a grandnephew, and called from Auburn Correctional Facility, in upstate New York, where he was serving a life sentence for murder.

Heshy was Harold's Yiddish name. He got the nickname Kayo—as in K.O.—from a stint as a semi-pro boxer. He was also known as Boom Boom, the Bayonne Bomber, and Hershy—the last apparently a Gentile's corruption of Heshy. It stuck, and he sometimes passed out Hershey bars when he introduced himself.

Kayo Konigsberg was a model for two fictional characters: Cagney Cohn in "Bar Tales," a 1973 short story that Sidney Zion published in *The Antioch Review;* and Albert (King Kong) Karpstein, the antagonist of Peter Maas's 1979 novel, "Made in America." Both portray a Jewish gangster out of Jersey, hit man of the first tier and loan shark of last resort. Karpstein's humanizing vice is a Milky Way habit, and an associate calls him Milky. Cagney Cohn is "a guy whose very existence could turn you into an atheist, since if there is a God then why is there a Cagney Cohn."

"Something about Harold I just fucking love," Zion reminisced not long ago at the Yale Club, where he introduced me to his friends as "Kayo's nephew."

"He says '*Olev hasholem*' every time he talks about one of the guys he killed." Zion squinted at me appraisingly. "He could scare the hell out of someone just by looking at him. I don't think you could do that."

I was often pressured to share people's affection for Harold, as if he were an endearing eccentric, a pet monster. "Once you're involved with Harold, you get to know a lot of *Haroldkeit*," Ivan Fisher, one of his lawyers, said. "You know, like *Yiddishkeit*? This was a guy who could, on command, froth at the mouth. He'd say, 'Here, let me show you something.' He was my first true sociopath, and brilliant, brilliant, brilliant. But he could be just adorable."

Harold, according to myth, survived seventeen gun battles. He could run his thumb along a roll of bills and tell if a twenty was missing. He always ordered two steaks at once. Collecting on a loan in Newark, he ripped a metal leg off a barstool and beat the daylights out of a couple of thugs in the club. The two detectives who showed up tried to break one of the legs off but found that, even together, they couldn't so much as bend it.

Harold's lawyer Raymond A. Brown, who still practices in Newark, told me, "Hershy was my favorite client. He made Frank Sinatra sing for my wife at one of his clubs." In defending Harold, Brown lost only once, a federal hijacking case in 1963. Many nights during the trial, the government later discovered, Harold was out late shaking down his debtors; during the day, he nodded off in the courtroom. Brown, a star orator, played the room like a Pentecostal. "I work up to my summation," he recalled. "I say the case is so unjust I'm amazed this eagle on the flagpole hasn't screamed in protest. Right at my magnificent pause, Harold farted. The whole place turned, and there he was, off to sleep, wiping his mouth with his hand."

No less an arbiter of rogue decency than Murray Kempton was captivated, at least initially; he wrote three columns for the *Post* about the fits Harold was giving the government. "The image of Harold (Kayo) Konigsberg has sat intactly enormous in the mind through years while the legends of Robert McNamara and Adam Clayton Powell have withered away," Kempton wrote in March, 1967. He warned, however, "There are few worse mistakes than the close-up inspection of one's heroes."

"Just for the record, I knew you were naked before I ate the apple."

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Auburn Correctional Facility is the oldest prison operating in New York State, a maximum-security prison built along the lines of a medieval fortress, with a copper minuteman standing watch from a crenellated tower. I made my first visit to Auburn to see Harold in the summer of 1998.

I waited in the visitors' center before a cardboard backdrop of a beach scene. To my right were the window partitions and handsets used for no-contact visits, a couple of lipstick kisses on the plate glass. A heavy steel door opened, and there was Harold, in forest-green prison garb, and work boots. He is five feet nine, and fat around the midsection, with bandy legs, hooded blue eyes, and thick white hair like my grandfather Leo's.

I extended my hand, which he ignored. "What the fuck kind of way is that to greet family?" he said, and gave me a kiss on the mouth. Then he asked after all my cousins by name, people he'd never met. He was showing off.

"It's a funny thing," he said. "Family don't seem to mean anything anymore." He had not, he said, received a single condolence card when his wife died, two months earlier. "After my mother died—may she rest in peace, God rest her soul—my brother and sisters sat shivah for me like I was dead."

He had me buy him four Dr Peppers and two ice-cream sandwiches. One of the ice-cream sandwiches got stuck in the vending machine, and a guard helped me pull it out. "What are you, a cripple?" Harold said.

My granduncle is as strong as an ox and looks healthy, although he explained that he suffers from emphysema. He said he could have got out long ago but has repeatedly turned down offers to testify against other mobsters. "The windup is, you think your freedom is worth your self-respect?" he said. He burped, like someone who could burp the alphabet. "Listen, I used to be somebody. I used to have the power of life and death. You know what that means? It means the government didn't decide, we did."

"Decided what?"

He rolled his eyes, annoyed. "Oh, you couldn't believe the kinds of things we decided. This thing won't die." (This thing: the Mafia.) I thought of what Robert Stewart, a former organized-

"He's on a timer."

crime prosecutor in New Jersey, had said when I told him I was writing about Harold: "Do you want to get yourself killed? I wouldn't want him reading my name saying something he doesn't like."

I asked Harold why he'd solicited me. "I'm thinking about taking the story of my life and fictionalizing it some," he said, spreading his hands out wide. "Then we sell it to those Weinstein brothers at Miramar." The title he had in mind was "From the Ashes of Hell to the Power of Heaven." "The ashes part involves running up against a greater power—Robert Kennedy persecuting me." The power of Heaven would come when our hero is released from prison and reunited with his family. "And the windup is . . ." He paused. "The windup is a lot of fucking things."

He proudly claimed that, in 1968, Random House, Time-Life, and M-G-M had together offered him a large sum of money to collaborate with a writer. "You think if I didn't do it for Bennett Cerf I'm gonna do it for a cocksucker like you for free?" he erupted, pounding the table. I flinched. "I ain't gonna hit you," he said, suddenly calm. "You know you got your grandfather's nose?"

But Harold did talk to me, through ten visits over three years. I have learned about things I have no idea what to do with, including crimes he was never charged with. I assure myself that the fact that we are related is unimportant, and I am free to write about Harold as a journalist. But I cannot doubt that he told me what he did only because I am a blood relative. And, because I am a blood relative, much of what I have learned I wish I didn't know.

My great-grandparents Mendel and Fannie Konigsberg emigrated separately from eastern Galicia (now in Ukraine) and met in Bayonne. They spoke Yiddish and English with their children, and Polish to each other when they didn't want to be understood. Mendel was five feet six but rugged, with enormous workman's hands. He had a contracting business, and in 1930 he poured the concrete that anchored the New Jersey side of the Bayonne Bridge, which connects the city to Staten Island.

Heshy was the youngest of five children, said to have weighed an astonishing thirteen pounds at birth, in 1927. He had blond ringlets that his mother did not cut until he was three years old, and then saved in a canvas bag in their living room, which is where they sit today. "It was like Samson," his sister Ruthie says. "Except the minute they cut the hair he became the Devil."

Harold told me that when he was thirteen, in a fight over control of a neighborhood crap game, he pulled a gun on an older Italian boy whose father was affiliated with the Black Hand (a precursor of the American Mafia). The altercation ended once he emptied the boy's pockets. "I had no idea at that time what was organized crime," Harold recalled. "I began to understand." He smiled.

Mendel, as was inevitable for someone in construction, had a working acquaintanceship with the Mob, and when it was clear that his boy had messed with someone from the wrong family, he took him to see Abner (Longy) Zwillman. Zwillman was one of the biggest gangsters in the country, the man who turned gaming and bootlegging into Mob staples and in effect gave organization to organized crime. He was tall and good-looking. He had dated Jean Harlow and kept a lock of what he said was her pubic hair in his wallet to show friends.

Zwillman looked approvingly at Harold, who was nearly full grown, and put him to work at fifty dollars a week. Harold and his friends corralled all the alcohol business between Twenty-fifth Street and the Hudson River in Bayonne and learned how to run numbers. Soon, Harold was making more money than the rest of his family put together.

Harold became Zwillman's driver and bodyguard. For Zwillman, there had been no Great Depression. He lived in a Tudor mansion in West Orange, with menservants in the kitchen and a study full of law books. "You could ask for anything at Longy's house and it'd be there," Harold said. Although Harold was sixteen when he dropped out of school, he had not yet completed eighth grade. By the time he was twenty-three, he had been arrested twenty times, mostly for robberies and assaults.

Harold's sisters have always characterized his outlaw career as something completely independent of the family, as if a mutual abandonment occurred the first time he skipped *heder*. But Mendel himself operated a small bootlegging operation from a still in his attic, producing slivovitz, hundred-and-eighty-proof plum brandy. One day, when Harold was in his teens, he and Leo helped their father stow twenty single-gallon cans of slivovitz under the floorboard of his Dodge and accompanied him to the Lower East Side, where a rabbi had a standing order. Just outside the Holland

Tunnel, Leo was pulled over by a policeman. As the cop approached, Leo began rubbing the steering column, explaining to his father, "I'm trying to get some grease on my hands"—to appear as though he were merely a driver, unaware of what was hidden on board. He wet his pants.

"My father saw that his other son didn't have the stomach for that kind of business," Harold said. "He was so pure, Leo. But he had to work, with his hands. You think your grandfather had five million dollars in the bank like I had? You think he had a million shares of U.S. Glass?" He held up a paper towel. "He couldn't steal this."

The first big sentence came down in 1950: fourteen years, for robbing an appliance store at gunpoint and severely beating its owner. My father, who was eight years old at the time, was told that his Uncle Heshy was out of town and working for the government. Only when he discovered a letter with "Drawer N" in Trenton as the return address did he learn the truth. After that, Leo's family rode with him to the penitentiary on Sunday afternoons and waited for him in the car as he visited Harold. "He gave his parents such a list of requests—the cooked chickens and Genoa salamis and cheese," my grandmother says. "Leo had three men at the warehouse working on it for a day or two. Non-kosher salamis—nobody else ate that."

Released after eight years, Harold sat at Fannie and Mendel's kitchen table, blustering about the connections he'd made in prison and bragging about his new Cadillac. "We almost never saw him after that," my father recalls. "My parents were protecting us from him." Except for one legendarily tempting silver tea set, his gifts were not accepted.

In 1960, he met a little Italian lady with blazing-red hair. Her parents lived on Wright Avenue in Jersey City, in the middle of Harold's turf. "I seen how she was in the neighborhood—not crying or loud, not with this guy and that, like all the other cunts," he says. He wooed her for six months with boxes of cookies from Sutter's, in Greenwich Village. (He noticed the place did a brisk business, so he had it robbed and found a hundred and forty thousand dollars in the vault.)

Harold proposed with a four-carat diamond solitaire. They settled in Lodi, across the George Washington Bridge, four towns deep into New Jersey. It was a big house—five bedrooms and a finished basement—on a small lot. In quick succession, they had two daughters.

Not long after I first saw Harold, I was introduced to his older daughter at my cousin's wedding in Texas. She had travelled halfway across the country for the night, even though she barely knew the cousin, because, she said, "that's what family does." When I told her I was writing about her father, she became hysterical. "Who wants to read about that?" she said. "Nobody who knows me knows about this. You have no right to play God and resurrect it. Do you think anybody will hire you after they find out who your uncle is?"

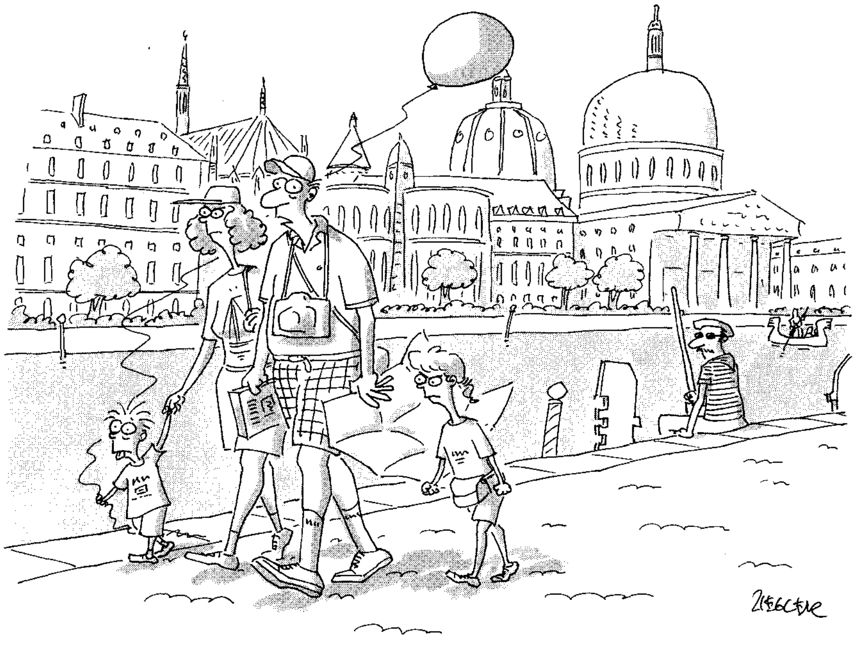
Almost everyone in my family objected to the idea of my telling Harold's story. My aunt, who had known Harold only when she was a little girl, hung up on me when I called to ask a question. I stayed at my grandmother's house when I was doing research in Bayonne and Jersey City, but after a couple of days she said it was making her feel complicit and told me to find a hotel.

Harold built his C.V. in a remarkably short time, and was most active from 1958 to 1963, between incarcerations. He owed his range—bookmaking, resort hotels, hijacking, and trucking—to his having a working relationship with a number of Mafia families. He was a nine-to-fiver many days, as evidenced by F.B.I. surveillance of the office he shared with an accountant at 19 West Forty-fourth Street, near the Algonquin Hotel. In the reports, Harold and various associates discuss real-estate deals in the Philippines and Argentina; his effort to sell a swim club; the distribution of stolen watches, clocks, and a single fur piece; and the purchase of B-25 and B-26 bombers, which, the F.B.I. noted, "could be used against Cuba," as well as a deal to sell arms to Cuban revolutionaries. Harold works late some nights. He naps on his couch. He returns from the Copacabana.

Moneylending remained his bread and butter. Federal agents who raided his office in Bayonne found a stack of immaculately kept ledgers and, in a kitchen drawer, thirty pairs of handcuffs. In 1961, a wiretap caught him comparing rackets with Angelo DeCarlo, a boss in New Jersey. "Use a little common sense, go and book horses," DeCarlo suggested. He thought loan-sharking was too slow a business.

"We don't never sit," Harold said. "We call three, four, five, six times a day." He said that for a five-thousand-dollar loan his standard interest—the vigorish—was two hundred and fifty dollars a week; if he lent twenty thousand dollars out for a year, his profit was fifty-two thousand dollars.

DeCarlo was impressed. "Two-fifty a



"How come I never see any tired and cranky Europeans?"

week? We get a hundred dollars a week for five thousand dollars."

"You're scabs," Harold said. "You'll have to organize you guys."

Harold told clients he hoped they didn't pay. He delighted in the extortion process, casting himself as its lone upright party. Violence just meant he was keeping his word: his client, after all, had broken the agreement. "The curse of my business," he told me, philosophically, "is you got to do business with a lot of scumbag cocksuckers."

But Harold's prey were often ordinary people conducting legal transactions—if somewhere along the margins of commerce. In the testimony and wiretapping transcripts that arose from two extortion cases, the despair of his victims is palpable; they had no idea what they were getting into. Joseph Zavod, a real-estate speculator in Philadelphia, was one such client. At a public auction on June 24, 1963, Zavod and three partners had purchased the West Philadelphia Jewish Community Center for ninety thousand dollars. They planned to resell it immediately, through a prearranged deal, to the Cobbs Creek Civic Association for a hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Unfortunately, they had miscalculated the amount needed for a down payment and discovered themselves thirteen thousand five hundred dollars short.

Joseph Zavod had never been much of a businessman. In a good year, he brought home maybe eight thousand dollars before taxes. He was a happy-go-lucky type, an enthusiast for magic tricks and hypnotism and exotic animals. Zavod opened a pet-supply store and, when that failed, worked as a buyer for a drugstore chain. In 1963, he was diagnosed with polycythemia, a condition that caused his body to overproduce red blood cells. The main symptom was constant fatigue, which forced him to look for a desk job. Real estate seemed like a good idea.

One of the first opportunities that came his way was the J.C.C. deal, and he really needed it to work out. He was thirty-nine, with three children, no disability insurance, and no savings to speak of. He stood to make at least fifteen thousand dollars from the resale. Zavod later testified that, through a tenuous connection of one of his partners, Jimmy Roberts, he contacted Harold, and, late at night, Zavod and Roberts drove to Bayonne.

The windows of Harold's storefront office on Hudson Boulevard were clouded by grime, and the front room was full of broken furniture. He sat in the back, at a large desk, flanked by two of his "bookkeepers," there to serve as extra muscle. Zavod detailed his plan to flip the J.C.C. and requested a thirteen-thousand-five-hundred-dollar loan. Harold reached into a drawer and pulled out a fistful of large-denomination bills.

"He stacked them in front of him and they made quite a nice pile," Zavod testified. "He counted off thirteen thousand five hundred dollars, put a rubber band around it and pushed it out on the desk, and put the rest of it away." Nervously, Zavod and Roberts agreed to his outrageous terms: twenty-five thousand five hundred dollars for the thirteen thousand five hundred dollars, to be paid on an installment plan over the course of a month.

Zavod asked if they had to fill out any promissory notes or loan papers. "No, just a handshake is enough," Harold said. He took a long, bone-handled revolver from his desk and pointed it at Zavod. "This I do not like to use in order to collect my money." Then he picked up a fourteen-inch-long piece of rubber hose that was filled with lead, and whacked Roberts on the knee with it. "That hurt, didn't it?" Harold said. "I would much rather use this."

Zavod and his partners missed the deadline; their resale settlement was stalled. Harold granted a couple of extensions, but, according to the testimony, the arrangement quickly dissolved into an exchange of pleas and threats. The culmination was Harold's unannounced appearance, on August 27th, on Zavod's doorstep in Broomall, a suburb west of Philadelphia. "My sister let him in," his son Alan Zavod told me. "She was twelve. I was seventeen that summer. She told him where the bedroom was, and he marched straight upstairs."

"I went a little crazy with this guy," Harold told me.

Zavod was laid up with a complication from the blood disorder. Harold rifled through Zavod's closet and drawers, looking for money. "You can't even afford to buy your wife any decent jewelry. There is nothing in here but junk." He said that if Zavod could not deliver thirteen thousand five hundred dollars within another month—and if he wanted to save his own life—his home was his only collateral. Harold would pay Zavod twenty-five thousand dollars for the three-bedroom house. Since Zavod still owed more than nine thousand dollars on the house, Harold explained, that left him with about fifteen hundred dollars to buy a new one.

Zavod looked up. "I would rather not. Do I have any choice?"

Harold drew up a bill of sale. Zavod summoned his wife upstairs to co-sign it.

It was a busy year for Harold. During that summer of 1963, he was out on bail in four separate cases, and was facing a ten-year sentence for possessing a truck full of stolen men's suits. On September 12th, as Zavod continued to scramble, Harold flew to Denver, where a businessman named Albert Hayutin had hired him. Hayutin wanted Harold to retrieve a hundred and twenty thousand dollars owed him by a stockbroker, Joseph Cannistraci, from a partnership in a land-development and mining company.

"Like an evil genie unwittingly released, the sadistic defendant rapidly assumed the entire direction and control of the conspiracy," reads an appellate brief from the eventual case against Harold. The first day Harold was in town, according to testimony, Hayutin returned to his office from lunch and found Cannistraci, who weighed some three hundred pounds, stripped to the waist. Harold was sitting beside him holding a revolver.

Hayutin asked, "What's going on here?"

Harold said that he and Cannistraci had reached "a complete understanding."

Back in New York, he stormed into a Wall Street brokerage company where Cannistraci was a principal and seized stocks as partial payment. Cannistraci couldn't come up with the rest, of course, but what really got him in trouble was showing up two days late for an appointment at Harold's office. As his only defense, he brought his friend Earl Humphreys, a lounge singer and ex-marine who had come to New York to perform on Johnny Carson's "Tonight Show."

Harold was furious. He told Canni-

SHOWCASE BY MATTHIAS CLAMER *The New York-based art-rock band Blonde Redhead has international roots: Simone and Amedeo Pace are Italian twins, and Kazu Makino is Japanese. The sonic extremes of their early records—ranging from punishing noise to dreamy soundscape—have converged in their most recent album, "Melody of Certain Damaged Lemons."*

straci it was no longer about money but a matter of "respect." Off came Harold's wedding band, his watch, and his jacket. He rolled up his sleeves.

"He then told me either I'm going to die as a man or die as a coward," Cannistraci told a grand jury. (Putting up resistance, Harold explained, was dying like a coward.) "But if I did not die like a man then he would proceed to kill each member of my family, including my son when he reached the age of thirteen, and there was no business discussion at all." From the adjoining room, Cannistraci said, an unseen person handed Harold a plastic sheath filled with copper wires. Over the course of four hours, he struck Cannistraci fifty or so times on the arms and head, then landed a blow above his ear, opening a cut.

Humphreys, permitted to mop the blood from Cannistraci's neck with a handkerchief, spoke up. "If he has any more of this coming," he said, "I would rather take them than watch them."

This so impressed Harold that he gave Cannistraci a two-day reprieve.

Cannistraci went to the Manhattan District Attorney. Detectives installed a bug near Harold's desk and tapped Humphreys's phone. "Kayo called me up after Cannistraci missed his next appointment," Humphreys told me. "He'd taken a shine to me. I got the feeling he wanted to be friends."

"You know what bothers me more than anything in the world?" Harold said to Humphreys. "That you were man enough to . . . suffer for him, and this man didn't even have the audacity, or the integrity, rather, to protect you and . . . at least keep his word, you know, by showing up." He offered to help Humphreys get singing gigs at a night club.

Harold was arrested for extortion on October 23rd, just as he was planning to head off to the Philippines. (He had learned that he was under investigation.) The same week, extortion charges were also brought against him in Philadelphia; Joseph Zavod had gone to the F.B.I. The day after the New York case was slated for trial, Cannistraci was found murdered on the Long Island Expressway.

"The cook, sire—for some reason you have his pepper mill."

Here began the second career of Kayo Konigsberg, eluding the law from behind bars. First, he gave up on appealing the smaller outstanding convictions in New Jersey and began serving three consecutive sentences at the Hudson County Jail, in Jersey City. As a prisoner there, he was immune from a New York State writ of prosecution; no trial against him in New York could start until the D.A.'s office could get him moved. He had good reason to stay, having easily bought off the warden, Henry McFarland. "I ran that place," Harold said. "I knew everybody in Hudson County. The warden was a sucker."

Harold's setup made the prison scene in "GoodFellas" look like prison. He had a private apartment done over for him in the jail library, with his own TV, telephone, radio, refrigerator, hot plate, desk, and sofa. "He had a wine-colored rug and parlor chairs," a fellow-prisoner, Michael Hardy, recalled. "On Rosh Hashanah he made sure all the Jewish cons got invited to services. He sent the guards out for pizzas." Any inmate who came to Harold with the right recommendation was looked after. He was allowed unlimited visitors. A grand jury in 1965 was told that one frequent guest was twenty-five-year-old Marilyn Jean Fraser, a former Rose Bowl Queen whom the United States Attorney's office identified as a heroin addict and fifty-dollar-a-night call girl. At the time, stories circulated that Harold kept a prisoner as a cook and threw dinner parties, and left the jail in the evenings to collect debts. Some afternoons, it was said, he and the warden went to the racetrack together.

In Gay Talese's "Honor Thy Father," just after the Mafia heir Bill Bonanno arrives in prison, a guard presents him with candy and magazines and says they are a welcoming gift from Kayo Konigsberg. "Your uncle always impressed me," Bonanno told me. "No matter where he was, he found a way to manipulate the situation."

He had a knack for getting under people's skin, doing favors that left them indebted or ensnared. David M. Satz, a former United States Attorney who prosecuted Harold in New Jersey, recalled, "Anybody that Harold drew into his vortex, they became his property. He overwhelmed people so they were like little lambs." One lawyer made a lot of money from Harold's stock tips, and others had the bad judgment to frequent his parties at the Jersey City jail. People came to believe that those who worked as Harold's lawyers were at risk of being owned by him.

"He made me crazy," said Frank Lopez, another of Harold's lawyers. "When he was on trial in Manhattan, he asked me to go to Joe Louis's hotel and hand him a thousand to sit with his supporters. He thought it would endear him to the three black jurors." (Louis showed up, but Harold lost anyway.)

Still another lawyer, Ivan Fisher, who represented Harold in one case and a successful appeal but abandoned it before the retrial, said, "He takes too much. He's very ingratiating. And he's terrifying physically." He wanted to know if Harold was still angry with him for quitting. "By the way," Fisher asked, "how old is he now?"

"Seventy-three."

"That helps," he said.

Exasperating demands and intimidation were woven through my own encounters with Harold. Each visit and letter carried requests: for a certain edition of a pocket dictionary or a brand of red felt-tips; for me to take up his parole with people of influence in New York State, or investigate the jurors who found him guilty almost twenty years ago. Without consulting me, he had a lawyer put me on a list of "paralegal assistants." (I wasn't the only relative on whom he'd conferred this status.) The arrangement left me uncomfortable, but I met with Harold on his terms because, he'd cautioned, it was our only assurance of privacy.

During one of my visits to Auburn, Harold lost his temper so many times—about my apparent misunderstandings of how he once bought off a cop, and of his methods in brokering a meeting between Joseph P. Kennedy and Vito Genovese—that I gathered my notebooks and stood up to leave.

"What are you doing?" he said softly. "We still got a few minutes."

"*Gai gezunt*," I said, from a farewell he'd taught me: Go in good health.

"*Gai gezunterhayt.*" Harold was walking away, finishing the saying under his breath. "*Sholem aleichem.*"

He turned to face me again. "And remember, by the mouth the fish dies." Though he knew I was writing about him, he occasionally threw out such ominous remarks.

I had been staying at the Auburn Holiday Inn, within walking distance of the prison, but it gave me the creeps, so I found a hotel in Syracuse, forty minutes away. I was in the habit of packing only one day's worth of clothes, telling myself that Harold was probably not going to see me and I'd get to go home. But why would he turn me away? Who else was going to listen to him? In the evening, I called my parents. They were sitting on their patio in Omaha. My father, usually interested in the details of my work, was always tired when I phoned from Auburn, or very busy sealing a leaky showerhead. That night, I made an extra effort to engage him.

"He's a fat old man in prison," my father said, cutting me off. "Why do this to yourself? Isn't it depressing?"

I was at Auburn the next morning with salamis, rye bread, and jars of mustard. Harold said he didn't want the food, intending, I'm sure, to let me know I needed him more than he needed me. He sent me instead to the vending machines for two packs of Lunchables. Like my grandfather, he was a big eater who ate daintily. He set the little stacks of crackers, cheese, and watery ham on paper towels and meticulously lined up sixteen sandwiches.

He spoke of his plan to appeal his murder conviction. When he got the verdict reversed, he was going to find the district attorney who had put him away, "and I will choke him with that verdict." He made a throttling gesture. "I will let him suck wind through his asshole."

"How can you say that?"

He shrugged. "I'm a very expressionable guy." He was serene again, adjusting his prison-issued bifocals.

Being the immediate object of his threats could be deeply unsettling. "I'm going to kill you," he told me during our last meeting, having decided that being written about would hurt his chances at his next parole hearing, in 2002. He leaned in close. "I'm going to chop you up a hundred different ways, and you can put that in your magazine." My gaze drifted toward the nearest guard, and Harold formed a claw with his thumb and two fingers. "I only need this to kill you. I'll go right through your eye and rip your brain out of your fucking head in three seconds. You'd be dead before the guards get here." He chuckled. "I'll bet you whimper like a baby when I kill you, you little cocksucker." A few minutes later, he was asking me to get him an orange soda.

On May 29, 1964, with trials for both the Philadelphia and the New York extortion cases looming, a prison guard discovered Harold in a "heavy sleep." His friend Warden McFarland reported that he had fallen off a chair while changing a light bulb and had hit his head on a bed frame. When he came to, a government physician diagnosed a brain contusion with a possible hemorrhage: "In answer to questions, he mumbles incoherently. . . . He is not capable of standing trial." Both trials were delayed.

In Manhattan, two sanity hearings were held, occupying nine weeks and generating twenty-four hundred pages of transcripts. Psychiatrists who testified to his incompetence gave conflicting assessments—attributing it, by turns, to a brain trauma, organic paresis, paranoid schizophrenia, and "chronic brain syndrome." At pretrial motions, he was brought into the courtroom on a stretcher, then positioned in a wheelchair. In a bathrobe, wrapped in blankets and with a towel around his head, he would sag for hours as though catatonic.

Away from court, according to government records, Harold was observed conferring with his lawyer, reading the *Times*, and playing pinochle with the other inmates. A federal prison-hospital evaluation said, "The patient was able to get several other patients to wait on him and to satisfy many of his needs. . . . He was able to convince the hydrotherapist that he was unable to use his right leg whatsoever even when actually standing and walking on both legs."

After doctors at Bellevue Hospital finally concluded that he was malingering, he concocted another strategy for evading trial. Although Harold has always denied rumors that he coöperated with the government, federal documents—and subsequent interviews—make clear that he did, persuading the Feds, in return, to

"If I were you at this point, I think I would hate myself, too."

• •

try secretly to shield him from justice. These documents are not part of the public record, and my attempts to obtain them under the Freedom of Information Act led nowhere. Eventually, in storage rooms of state and federal prosecutors and in the homes of retired investigators, I found hundreds of foxed pages never introduced in court—surveillance, F.B.I. interviews, and correspondence among Justice Department officials.

On January 11, 1965, John Malone, the F.B.I.'s top man in New York, got word from a prison official that Harold was interested in a visit "alone, as soon as possible." Malone met with Harold the next day.

According to a coded "airtel" memo from Malone's office to J. Edgar Hoover, Harold immediately declared that he might be willing to furnish information about La Cosa Nostra that included twenty murders. "When asked why he was doing this," the memo went on, "he stated that now he is down and out, the hoods that he did so much for are abandoning him and giving him a hard time, and he wants to have the last say." He also asked that the F.B.I. provide his wife and children with protection and money.

During the sixties, the F.B.I. had a serious public-relations problem. Hoover had long maintained that there was no such thing as organized crime. Now he was being shown up by his archrival, Robert Kennedy, who, as the United States Attorney General from 1961 to 1964, made dismantling the Mafia his highest priority.

Hoover gave the go-ahead to making a deal with Harold, though without promising money. "You should take into consideration that Mrs. Konigsberg is of Italian background and herself comes from a hoodlum-type family," he wrote Malone, and "they may not desire to be relocated by and receive financial assistance from the Government." Hoover instructed the New York office to be "most circumspect" in handling the informant, "bearing in mind the possibility of a devious trap being set by him for personal reasons."

A team of F.B.I. agents began visiting Harold at the federal penitentiary in Danbury, Connecticut, in May, 1965. "He would give you part of a story, because he said you already knew the rest," says John Connors, an agent who had tracked Harold since the early sixties. "He goaded you into asking questions he wasn't going to answer. But he got carried away. He liked listening to himself talk." In the first weeks, Harold outlined the power structures of Mafia families, who owned which rackets, which gangsters ate their daily marinara where. But when agents came to see him on May 25th he was bored with providing mere intelligence.

"This is nothing," he told them. "Why be interested in nickels and dimes?" Soon, he was cataloguing his own Mob hits.

To bolster his credibility, he sent the F.B.I. to a Mob graveyard in Jackson Township, New Jersey, where agents exhumed the remains of two bodies they believed to be his victims. One, a suspected informant, had been buried under a cement porch, and the other, a theatrical agent who owed money, had been stuffed into a metal drum in a chicken shed and, Harold said, doused with acid. They also found hair and bone fragments thought to belong to a woman whose husband was involved in the making of pornographic films.

In the table of contents to Harold's confessions, the F.B.I. lists twenty murders, deaths, and disappearances.

What the government wanted most was to pin Anthony Castellito's death on Tony Pro, a bigger catch than Harold. Robert Kennedy, in "The Enemy Within," his book about investigating unions for the Senate's McClellan committee, described the Teamsters as "a conspiracy of evil" and "the most powerful institution in this country—aside from the United States Government itself." Over the previous two years, another union challenger of Tony Pro's had been murdered, and Jimmy Hoffa and seven others were indicted for defrauding the Central States Pension Fund of more than twenty million dollars.

Harold told the F.B.I. about Castellito's murder. But before he would agree to testify he demanded the government drop the extortion cases against him in Philadelphia and New York. William Hundley, who ran the organized-crime unit at the Justice Department, was amenable, even recommending that Harold, as long as he helped them locate Castellito's body, be granted immunity from prosecution for any crimes he admitted to. As to the pending New York prosecution, Hundley assured his superiors, in a memo, "I know I can handle that one informally." Much to the Manhattan D.A.'s consternation, the Feds installed Harold at the Medical Center for Prisoners, in Springfield, Missouri, protracting his hoax with another year of psychiatric exams. And they quietly dropped the case against him in Philadelphia.

When the time was right, Harold was put on a train to Newark, then transported to the Somerset County jail, where not even the warden knew his identity. On June 30, 1966, he led marshals to the scene of Castellito's burial, on farmland east of Freehold Township. "We looked for two days," says Arnold M. Stone, the Justice Department lawyer who led the search effort. "We didn't find Castellito. Harold kept saying, 'It's gonna take a while.' " Harold had received a letter from his wife saying she'd heard the body had been moved. It was hoped that laboratory tests could find traces of the corpse or of its disinterment, but although Harold recognized the terrain, he could not pinpoint the exact spot.

Without a body, the Feds were unable to keep Harold out of court, and in December, 1966, he was returned to lower Manhattan and tried in one of the extortion cases. Here, he attempted to goad the judge into a mistrial. He announced that his lawyer Frances Kahn was a "spy" for the D.A., and fired her. He kept Kahn and Frank Lopez on as "paralegal assistants" for his *pro se* defense. They fed him notes from their seats at the defense table. "I had my wife sit alongside of me and look up words in a dictionary," Harold told me.

"People lined up outside 100 Centre Street to see the show he put on," Leonard Newman, one of the prosecutors, says. Harold wore the same mismatched suit every day and what the *Times* called a "King of Clubs beard." He bullied witnesses and, when overruled, accused the judge, Abraham Gellinoff, of trying to hide exculpatory information.

The people were represented by Frank Rogers, a politically ambitious assistant D.A. arguing his first case. Rogers, who had been a member of the law review at St. John's, was a skinny guy beginning to put on middle-age weight. He wore three-piece suits and smoked a pipe. Harold homed in on him, denouncing him as a "bigot, sadist, low-life, reptilest, fork-tongue talker." He even brought Rogers to the witness stand four times. "Every time he runs out of witnesses, he calls me," Rogers complained.

Cross-examining a psychiatrist who had been brought in to establish his sanity, Harold took an hour setting up a hypothetical situation. "Now, Doctor, assuming everything I've said to be true," he said, finally getting to his question, "do you have an opinion as to whether District Attorney Rogers is crazy?"

Those who wanted to like Harold were at a loss. In the *Post*, Murray Kempton filed a sorrowful dispatch: "One went . . . preparing to salute one of the giants of the American struggle for Constitutional liberty. . . . One fled after the second hour with an idol crumbling in the dust behind."

Deep into the trial, when Harold's ramblings strayed further than usual, Gellinoff cut him off. "Mr. Konigsberg, listen, my friend, now I'm—"

" 'My friend'? You got ten dollars, I'll sell you back your friendship," Harold said.

Gellinoff finally broke the following day. "Shut up when I'm talking," he said after excusing the jurors. "You are the greatest faker in the history of the court that I know of. . . . You are one of the most brilliant people that I have ever seen as a defendant in this court. . . . I have said these things on the record so that you will know, Mr. Konigsberg—"

"That you're prejudiced?"

"—you will not get away with this."

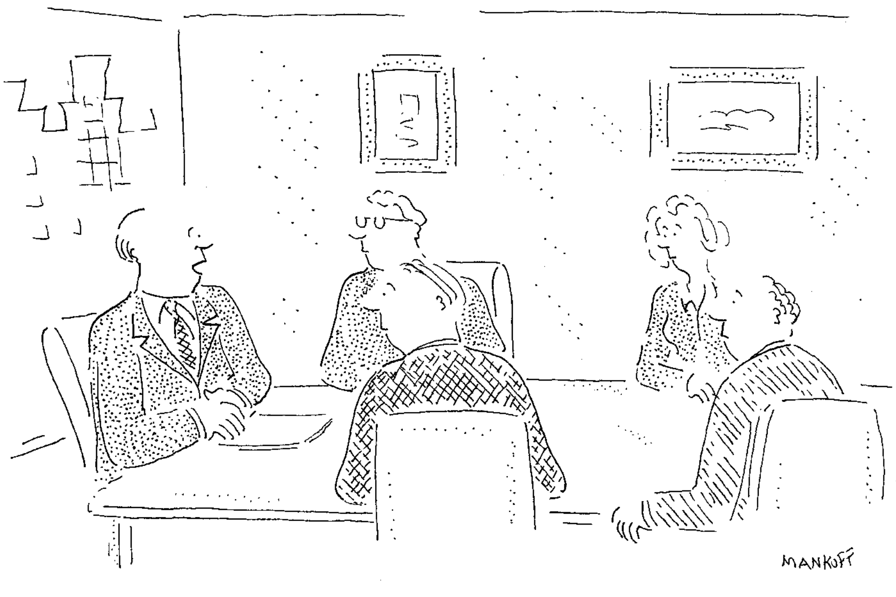
The jury found Harold guilty on four counts of extortion and one of conspiracy, but they remained undecided on four other counts and acquitted him of one. On the day of sentencing, he refused to admit that he was the same Harold Konigsberg who had been convicted of two prior felonies, and Gellinoff had no choice but to empanel a new jury and try a case simply to establish Harold's identity. Another five weeks in court, and Gellinoff gave him a stiff sentence of between thirty and forty-four years but remarked, "You're developing into quite a constitutional lawyer."

Even with this conviction, Harold was getting away with murder. Peter Richards, a Justice Department prosecutor, pleaded to his superiors, in a memo dated October 31, 1967, "It seems to me impossible to allow this man, who has confessed to more than twenty murders and who has told us that he will 'go gunning' for his enemies when he is released from prison, ever to be released from custody." Afraid that Gellinoff's sentence was going to be reversed, the Feds tried to use his admission of the Castellito murder against him, going so far as to prepare an indictment—only to drop the indictment soon afterward. With neither a body nor an eyewitness, there was not enough evidence to prosecute him for murder. The F.B.I.'s interviews with Harold had yielded nothing but humiliation.

Although he had hopes of self-preservation and revenge—preferential treatment and Tony Pro's comeuppance—Harold spoke to the F.B.I. for sport. He liked nothing more than to manipulate authorities and put them through contortions. "Now, there's a lot of things I'm guilty of," he told me once. "I'm just saying, catch me on something."

When I reached Paul Durkin, the primary F.B.I. agent assigned to Harold throughout this period, he said, "I don't want to get into discussing our relationship." Why not? "It's because I liked him."

Not long after the extortion trial, Rogers, the D.A., and one of his detectives, Joseph Coffey, brought Harold in for questioning. They did not know the extent of what he'd already told the F.B.I. "We wanted information on other people, so Rogers made the mortal fuckup of giving him immunity," Coffey told me.



"Good point, Remson. You couldn't be more right if you were me."

"They had no idea Harold was going

to implicate himself," Frank Lopez, who was also in the room, said.

At the time, Coffey was investigating the homicide of Johnny Earle, a waterfront racketeer who had been shot nine years earlier in front of a lunchtime crowd at the Fifty-seventh Street Cafeteria, near Eighth Avenue. "It was the first thing every cop asked," Coffey told me. "I said, 'Who killed Johnny Earle?' "

"Yeah, I did that," Harold replied. He proceeded with details, even pointing them toward corroborating evidence (a parking ticket he'd got when he was inside the diner). Then, Coffey said, he admitted to five more killings. "But he didn't give us a thing we could use. Rogers was devastated." According to the records of another detective in the room, the tape made of Harold's confession was lost. Coffey said the Earle case was closed as solved without arrest, and went on, "He was an unusual guy, your uncle. He didn't care about doing the forty-four years as long as he got over. In his own mind, he showed he was smarter than everybody else. Because he made a wreck out of a top judge like Gellinoff. And he sucked Rogers in, like unbelievable."

Big Sal Sinno, the accomplice of Harold's who vanished shortly after they murdered Castellito, in 1961, was forgotten but not gone. Later that year, fearing that Tony Pro planned to kill him, he had fled to Milwaukee. He worked for the railroad, under aliases, but at some point things started to go bad and his girlfriend, the mother of his two sons, turned to prostitution. Naturally, Big Sal later said, this was hard on the family. There were fights.

One day in 1975, after Big Sal hit her, she tried to get even. She phoned long-distance to the Hoboken police and told them that a "Charles Caputo," living in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, was actually Big Sal Sinno, who, officers recorded with puzzlement, "is wanted in Hoboken, N.J., for some serious crime." When Big Sal saw his phone bill and pieced together what his girlfriend had done, he hurriedly decamped with his kids and tried to make amends with Tony Pro, asking for money to relocate once again. He was given twenty-five hundred dollars and was promised another twenty-five hundred if he claimed it in person, but he figured he was being set up.

That's when Big Sal called the F.B.I. and begged for a spot in the witness-protection program. Special Agent John Markey asked what Big Sal could give them in return. He gave them the Castellito story.

In the summer of 1978, Kayo Konigsberg was finally tried for murder, along with Tony Pro. (The other principals were by now dead or missing.) For technical reasons, the case was brought by Michael Kavanagh, the District Attorney of Ulster County, New York, where the crime had taken place. "We were in over our heads," recalled Kavanagh, who was thirty-four years old and new to the job. "It was one of your bigger Mafia trials to date, in Kingston, our little Colonial county seat of twenty thousand. You've got guys right out of 'The Godfather' pulling up in limousines. You've got sharpshooters on top of the jewelry store across the street."

Harold's lawyer, Ivan Fisher, took the case for just twenty-five hundred dollars in expenses, but still Harold managed to obtain what they needed. "During our lunch breaks, he ordered in four-pound buckets of shrimp, with fresh tartar sauce and Russian dressing," Fisher told me. While they ate, Harold worked the phones and discovered that the New York Secretary of State had a file on a real-estate agent in Kerhonkson, who was going to testify to seeing him on Castellito's property the day of the murder. As it happened, the state had suspended the man's real-estate license for writing bad checks—the kind of misdeed that can be used to undermine a witness's credibility. Though Fisher tried to cross-examine him on these grounds, the D.A. objected and was sustained. A guilty verdict came in for both defendants, but Harold appealed and got his conviction overturned, forcing a retrial.

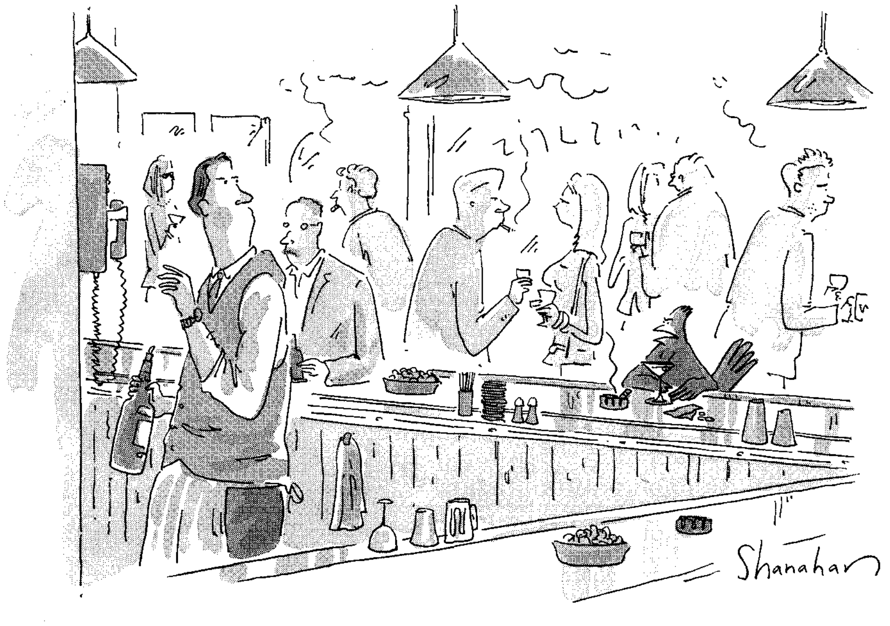
"The judge's preclusion to that cross ultimately caused the reversal," Fisher said. "Our case was built on Harold's investigation. I have no idea how he got the file. The prosecution didn't even have a copy."

Before and after the initial trial—between 1976 and 1979—Harold was housed in the Metropolitan Correctional Center, in lower Manhattan. He had the place rigged for reconnaissance. "Nine P.M., I would go into the counsellor's office and lock the door from inside," he told me.

"How did you get the keys?"

"Why do you ask stupid questions?"

Harold said he phoned around to prisons across the country, "and I asked for the Bureau of Identification. I'd say I was the counsellor from the M.C.C., they'd call me back at the M.C.C. office, they'd give me everything I wanted to know. I found where the informants



"If it's the reedy, gurgling 'cut-cut-turrrrr' of the long-billed marsh wren, I'm not here."

were. I found out Big Sal was being hid in Kansas City."

"Did anybody go after him?"

"Well, the decision was that we do nothing. And on my own there was not much I could do in the M.C.C., was there?"

Maybe Harold outsmarted himself. He represented himself in the retrial and was found guilty, this time for good. Tony Pro died as a prisoner in Lompoc, in 1988. Big Sal Sinno entered witness protection, but in 1988 he was arrested on a corner in the East Village, minutes after shooting an acquaintance. A detective quoted in the *Times* described the killing as "very professionally done."

Although Harold's daughters were infants the last time he was out of prison, they are quick to say he raised them. One is a lawyer and the other a corporate executive. One has described him as "my best friend, a wonderful father." Both speak to him on the telephone every week, and have done so for most of their lives. He provided for his wife and children, with a house and some money. The Cleveland gambler Moe Dalitz, he says, furnished them with five thousand dollars a month. After Dalitz died, in 1989, Harold's wife went to Boca Raton to see Gerry Catena, an aging gangster. He gave her ten thousand dollars, but he asked that she not come to him again.

America has a short and pliant memory. But Longy Zwillman's family members felt it necessary to change their name, according to a friend of theirs. The daughter of a major bookmaker who was an associate of Harold's and Zwillman's told me that she never discussed her father's work, even with her family. She insisted, though, that it wasn't a source of shame. "Don't take this the wrong way, but, I mean, I don't think my father ever killed anybody."

Last winter, Joseph Zavod's son drove me to his family's former home in Broomall, where he remembered Harold trying to throw his family out on the street with fifteen hundred dollars to their name. Alan Zavod is thickly built and has a salt-and-pepper goatee; he is married and works for a car dealership. He wore a leather bomber jacket with rawhide lacing up the front. The house, which has changed owners at least twice, sits on a cul-de-sac. It is part of a subdivision called Marple Heights, some hundred and fifty split-levels that went up in 1955.

Joseph Zavod had not, in fact, escaped Harold altogether unharmed. According to federal prosecutors, before Zavod went to the F.B.I., Angelo Bruno, the reigning Mafia don of Philadelphia, learned of the loan and, disapproving of a North Jersey gangster shylocking on his territory, temporarily forbade Harold from returning to collect. Only after Bruno's protection from Harold wore out did Zavod call the authorities. Zavod still struggled to find work after that, and Alan dropped out of Temple University in his freshman year to support the family with a succession of jobs in sales. Whether it was a favor for not assisting the government's crackdown on the Bruno family or because, as Alan put it, "nobody else wanted to hire my dad when he was in the papers for doing business with a loan shark," Joseph Zavod's next employer was a mortgage-placement company owned by one of Bruno's captains. I.R.S. audits, two indictments, and one conviction ensued. Zavod died of heart failure, in 1985. During the last decade of his life, he operated a pizza shop with his wife and three children.

"It wasn't so bad, all of us working together," Alan said. "We didn't need anyone else."

We took the West Chester Pike—a mid-century drag of automotive shops, pizzerias, and funeral homes—to the former West Philadelphia J.C.C. Now it is the Philadelphia Baptist Church, but the original carvings in the arched doorways remain: a Magen David, a menorah, Torah scrolls.

"For a long time after everything happened, my father and I would drive past this place," Alan said. An elevated train roared by. "Just like we're doing. And then we'd discreetly flip it the bird, both of us."

Anthony Castellito, Jr.—who was a truck driver, like his father—stayed in Tony Pro's Local 560 for thirteen years after his father was murdered. Anthony, Jr., felt stuck there, but it was a respectable job. "It fit my personality: you was a man," he said. "I wasn't going to be a clerk—what, some asshole?" It was "spite work," knowing that the person who was responsible for his father's disappearance was going to be writing him pension checks for the rest of his life. Later, he found employment in heavy construction, and in 1989 he retired to Florida, where my letter reached him.

"You probably don't know the kind of guy my father was," he said. "My father was a tough guy. If Kayo was so tough, why'd he have a bunch of other guys helping him?

"I can't believe at this time in my life that I would be talking to a Konigsberg. When I saw your name on the envelope, I thought it was Kayo. I thought, What, is he saying 'I'm sorry'? There's been a lot of heartaches because of him. My kid sister, God, if I say anything about what happened to our father, she loses it. She's got a swimming pool, a beautiful family, they have a lot of parties. Sometimes I tell her, 'I know somebody up there who'd be very proud of you right now.'

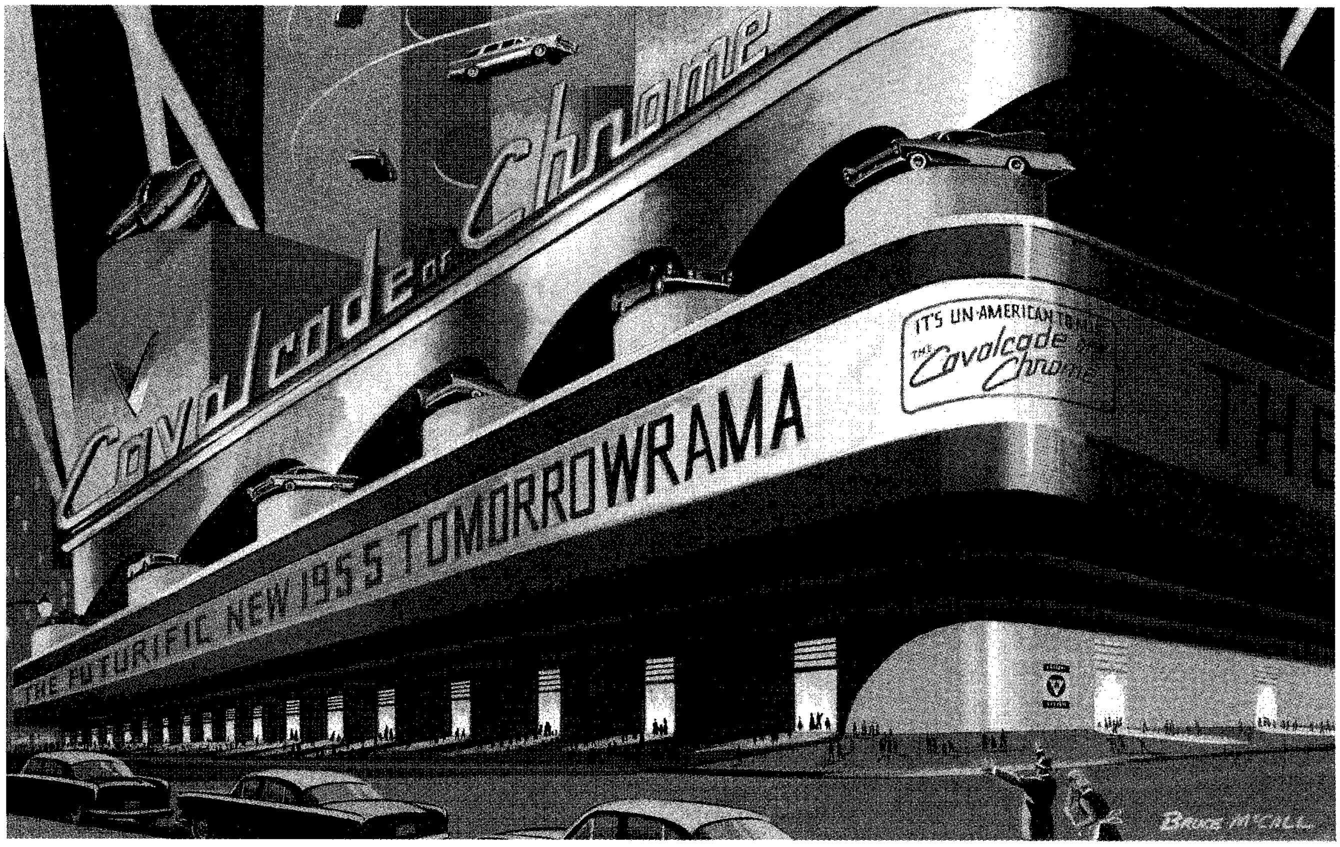
"By the way, if you talk to your uncle, could you please ask him where my father is? I mean, the body? My mother passed away last year, multiple heart attacks. It's a shame to die not knowing where your husband is. My sisters and I told her, 'Ma, he never even knew what happened, it was so fast.' I can't tell her he fought for his life, that he died in his kitchen."

"My dear nephew, I been betrayed by everybody," Harold said. He shuffled into the visitors' room at Auburn, combing back the wings of his hair. It was late one afternoon, and I had asked if he ever thought about how he ended up the way he did. I imagined he hadn't heard me, because he got up and announced that he was taking a piss. Then, sitting back down at our table, he said, "Let me ask you, does your father work hard? Did your grandfather work hard? So I don't know where I came from."

For a moment, I thought he was acknowledging the shame he had brought his family, and I put my hand on his. He recoiled and groaned. "Aw, you're like a salesman now," he said. "What could I tell you about the family? I separated myself a hundred different ways. What are you expecting to understand?" ♦

SKETCHBOOK BY BRUCE McCALL

THE LAST DREAM-O-RAMA

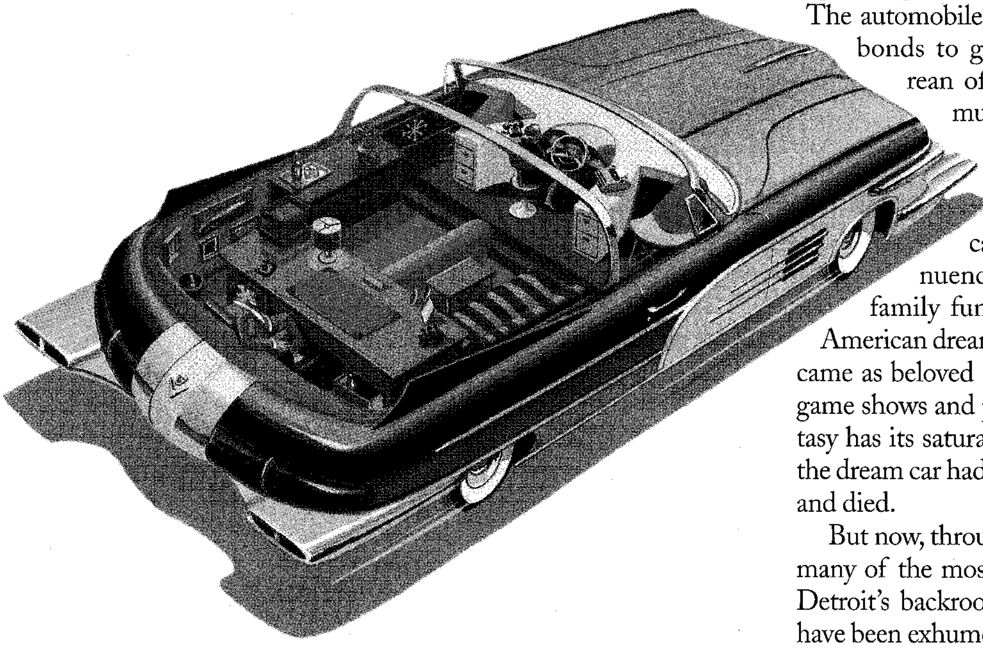


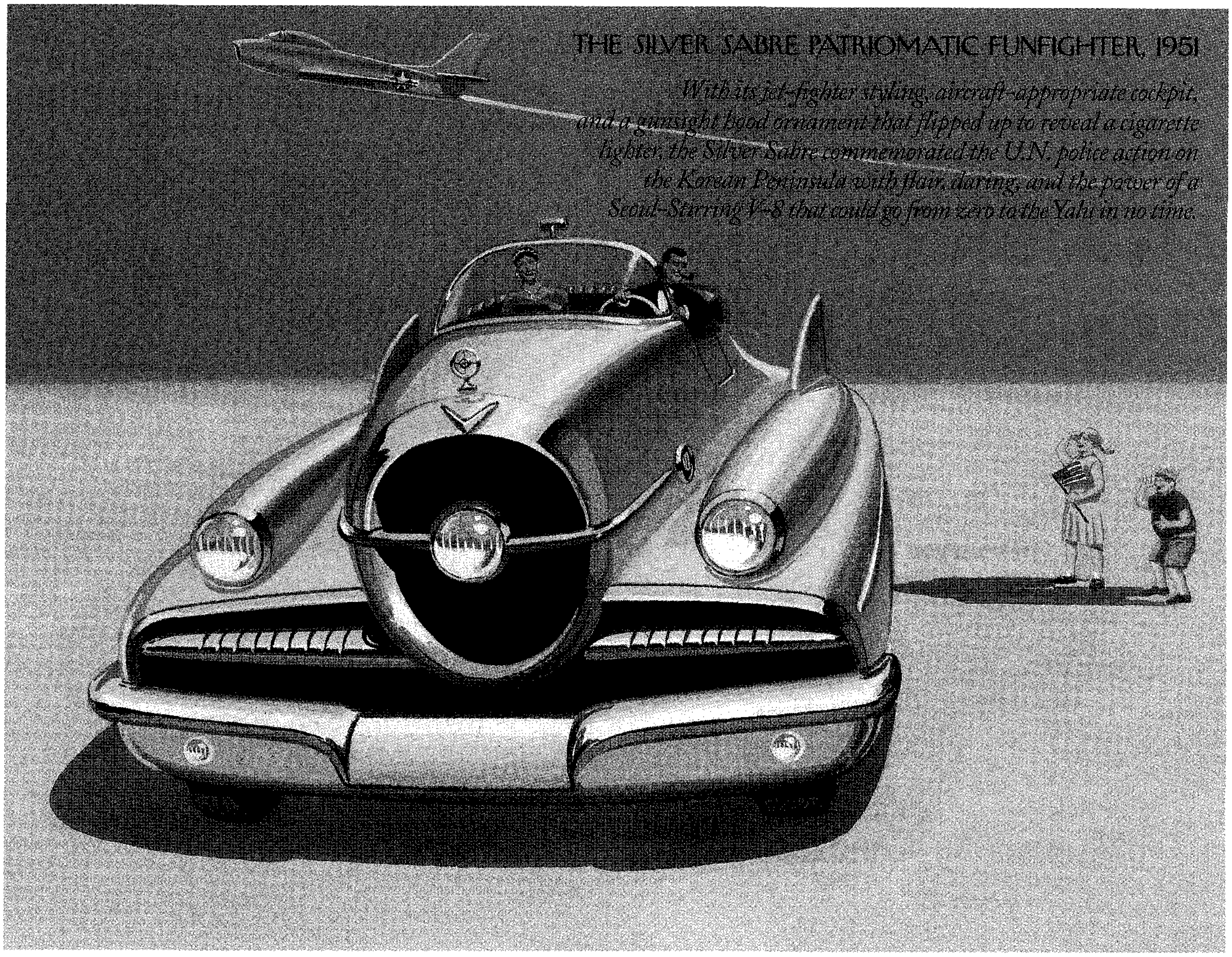
America's postwar economic boom fostered such unprecedented prosperity that easy credit allowed even poor folks to plunge hopelessly into debt. Suddenly, a brand-new car became an attainable dream for millions. Then something happened to supercharge those fantasies. The dream car arrived. The automobile was now liberated from its earthly bonds to go soaring into a futuristic empyrean of pop-up, push-button, retractable, multihued wonder, mirroring the optimism of a nation that now had the H-bomb, Cinerama, and chlorophyll chewing gum. The dream car, with its dazzling mix of sexual innuendo, exhibitionism, and wholesome family fun, was not one but a multitude of American dreams on wheels. No wonder it soon became as beloved a fixture of fifties life as rigged TV game shows and political witch-hunts. But even fantasy has its saturation point, and by the decade's end the dream car had overshot it. Like all dreams, it faded and died.

But now, through the miracle of forensic nostalgia, many of the most vivid of those dreams, interred in Detroit's backroom filing cases forty-odd years ago, have been exhumed. Let's take a peek.

BOSSMOBILE GAL FRIDAY EXECUSTREAK, 1958

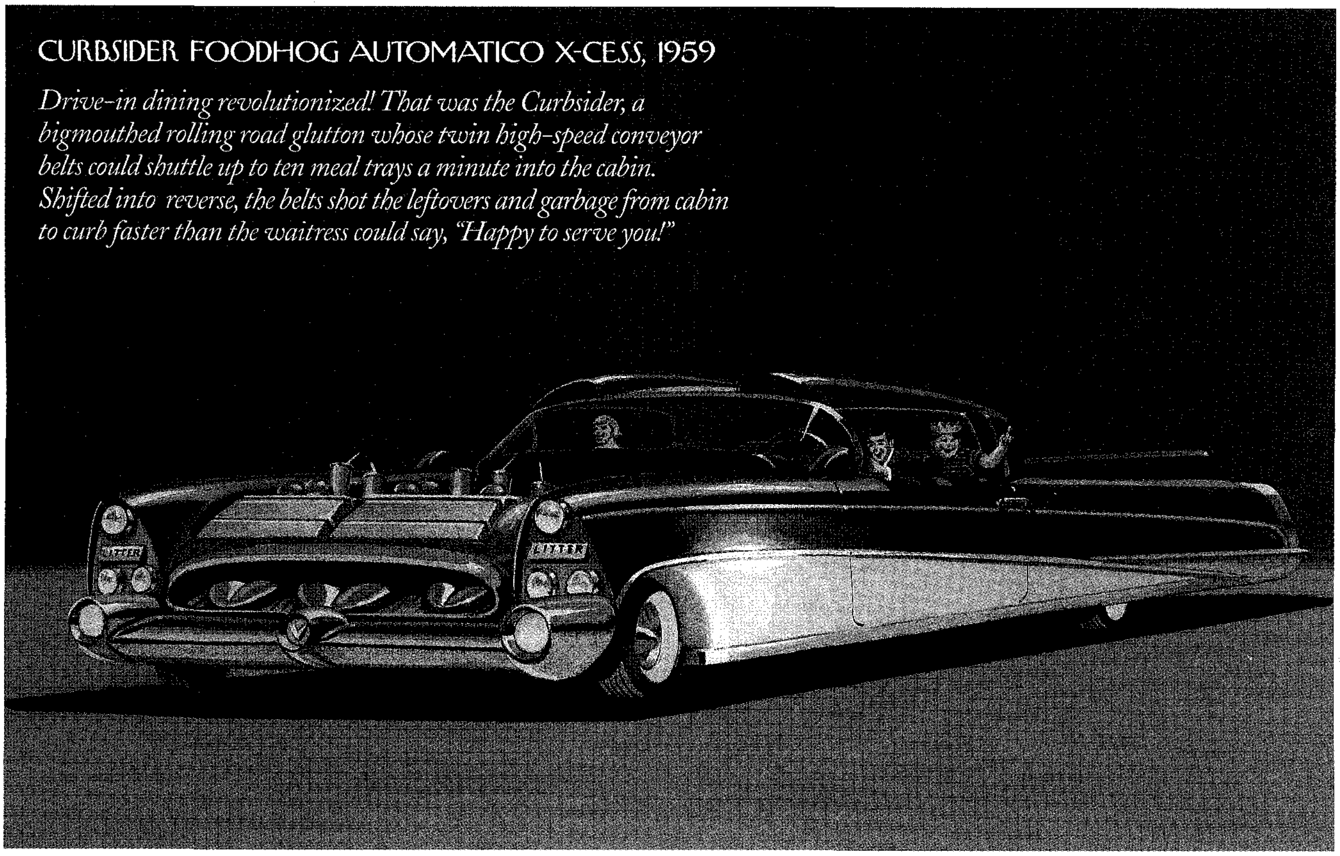
(Below) For the busy executive, a mobile corner office in which to digest his three-Martini lunch while Miss Jones, up front, does the typing, filing, phoning—and, oh yeah, driving. No goofing off, Missy!





THE SILVER SABRE PATRIOMATIC FUNFIGHTER, 1951

With its jet-fighter styling, aircraft-appropriate cockpit, and a gunsight hood ornament that flipped up to reveal a cigarette lighter, the Silver Sabre commemorated the U.N. police action on the Korean Peninsula with flair, daring, and the power of a Seoul-Stirring V-8 that could go from zero to the Yalu in no time.

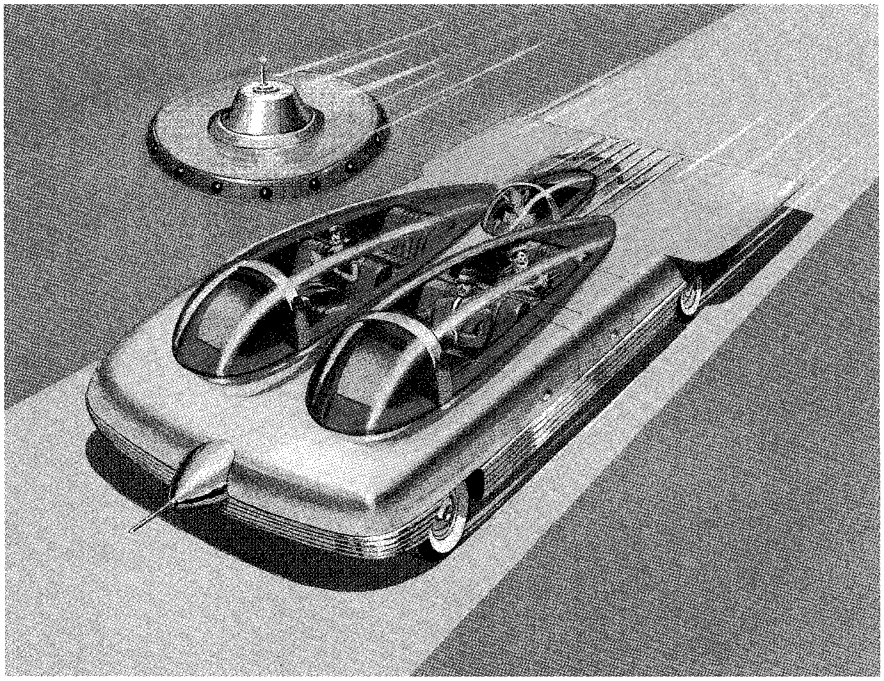


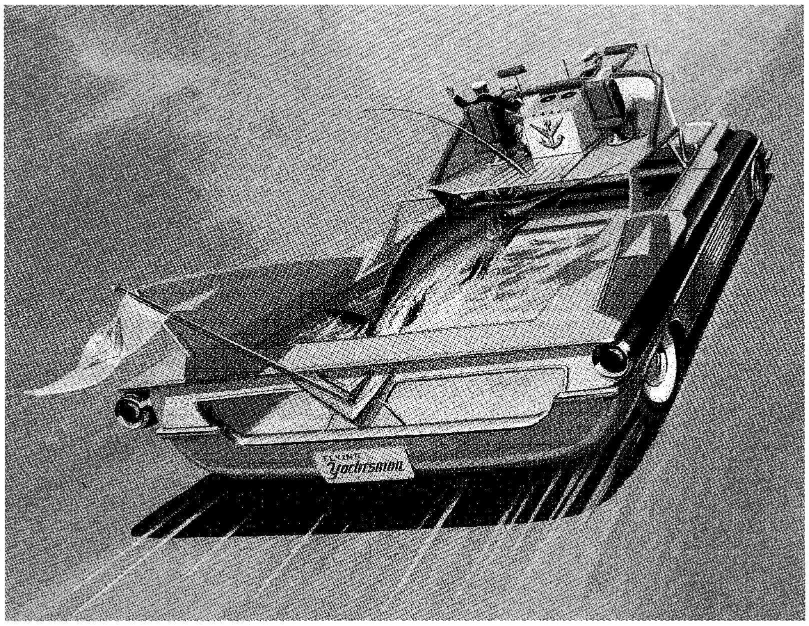
CURBSIDER FOODHOG AUTOMATICO X-CESS, 1959

Drive-in dining revolutionized! That was the Curbsider, a bigmouthed rolling road glutton whose twin high-speed conveyor belts could shuttle up to ten meal trays a minute into the cabin. Shifted into reverse, the belts shot the leftovers and garbage from cabin to curb faster than the waitress could say, "Happy to serve you!"

ORBITRONIC MINUS-ZERO SAUCERSNATCHER, 1956

The Saucersnatcher's airtight rear Isolation Dome holds a full flying-saucer crew of Communistic space invaders captured by Dad on a family drive. Meanwhile, Mom calls the F.B.I. and Junior taunts the Martian creeps with his atomic ray gun.



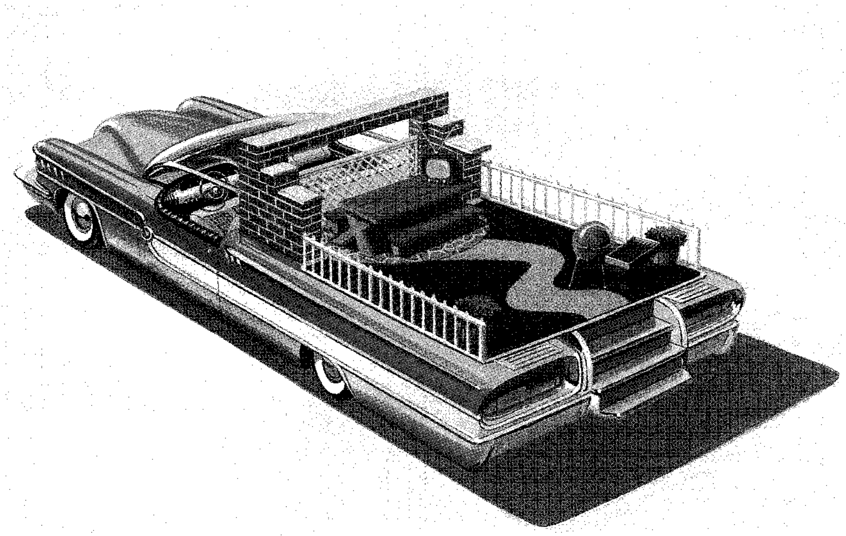


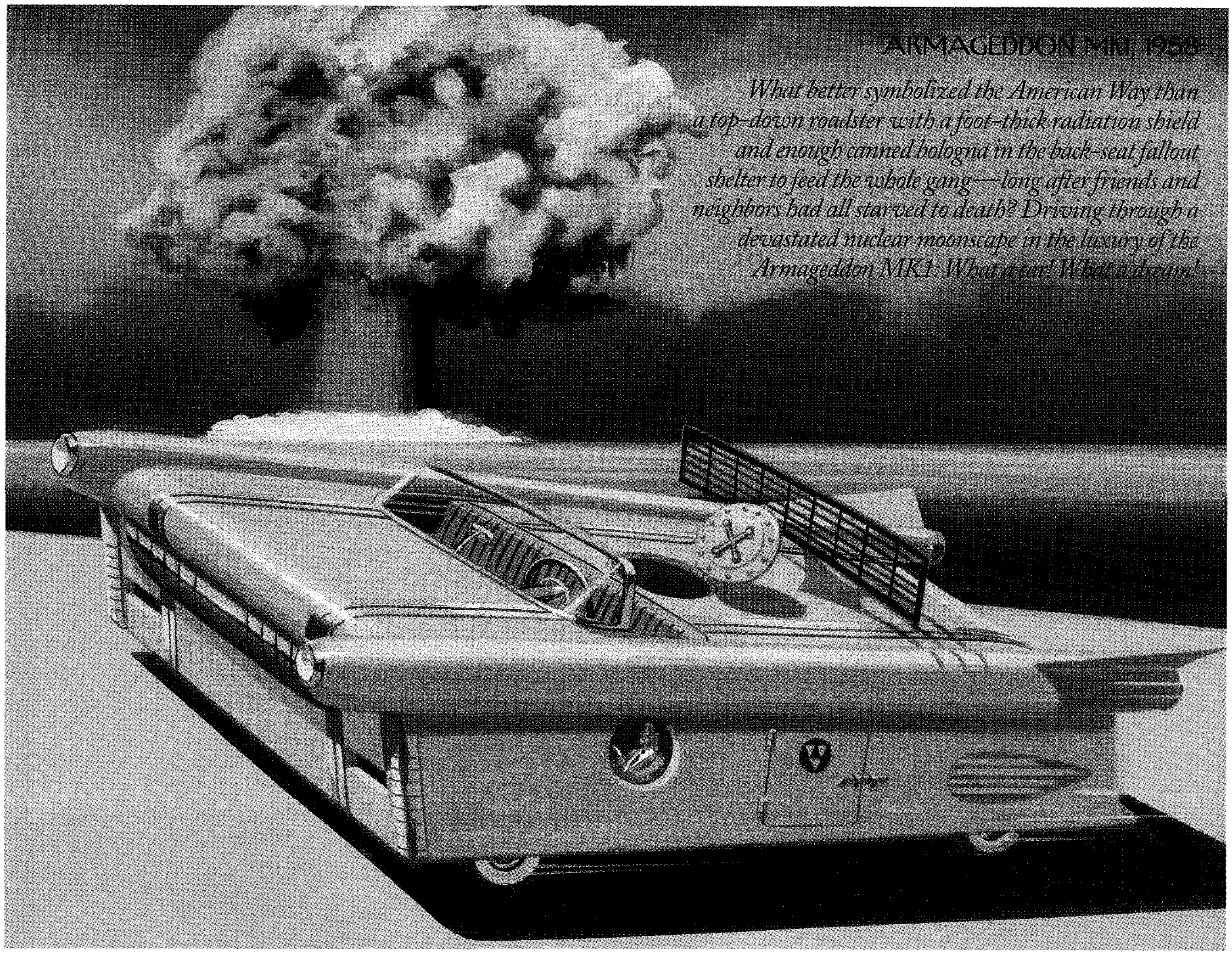
X-TROVERT X-QUISITE SILVER SPRAY, 1955

Deep-sea angling on the road—talk about a dream! Dual-Deck Drive Command lets the "skipper" clamber up top to the Flying Bridge and keep an eye on the fishing line behind him. When the Radarmatic buzzer sounds a strike, the Commander's co-driver hauls the catch in, then serves up a couple of Quik-Froz Hiway Highballs to celebrate!

BAR-B-KING ROYAL PATIO LEISURELINER, 1955

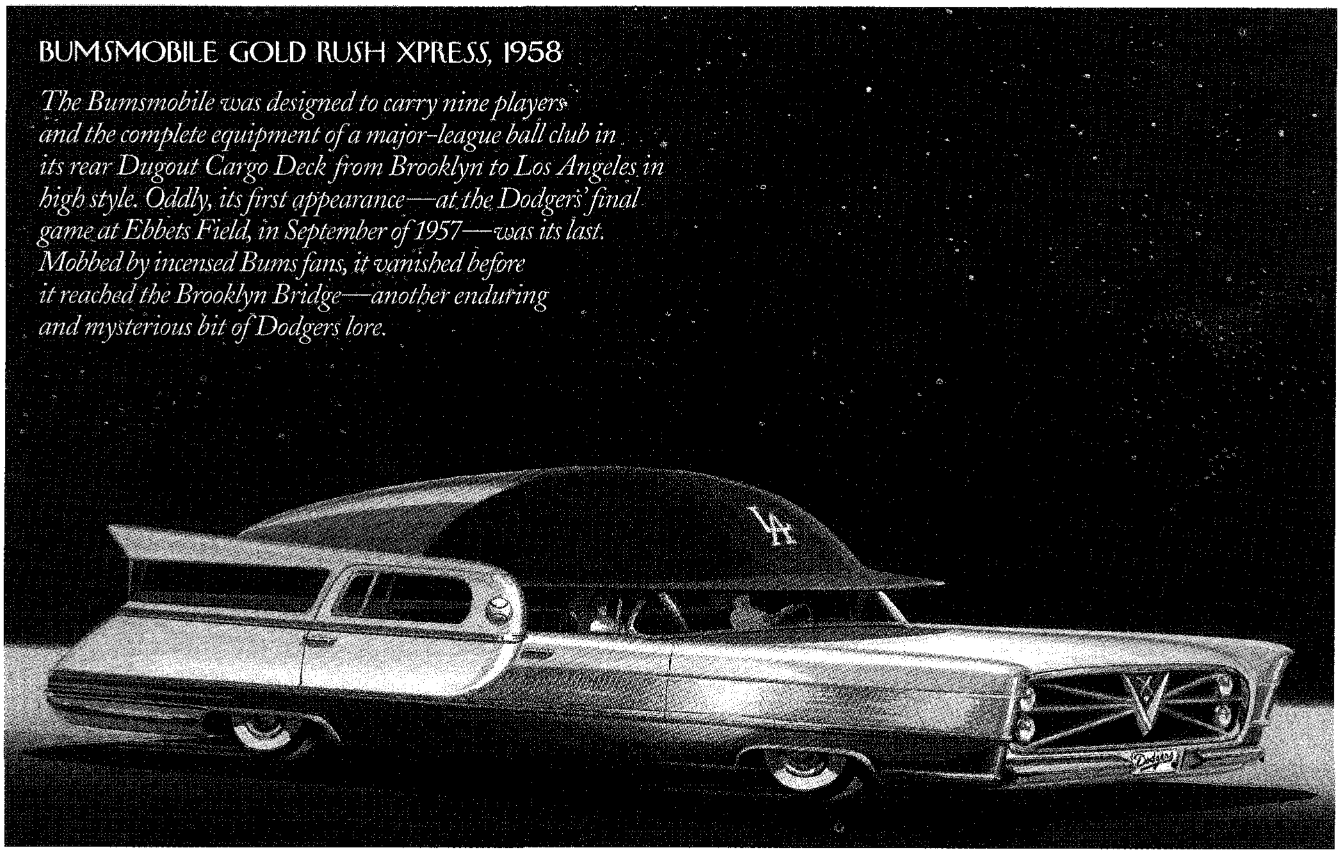
From charcoal grill to picnic table to No-Mow Synthetic Grass, here is a back-yard barbecue at fifty-five m.p.h.—and with the first drop of rain the whole flagstoned shebang automatically folds up and stows itself away. Complicated, a bit unsafe, unwieldy as all getout, sure. But add a few wieners and marshmallows, and you've got wholesome family fun!





ARMAGEDDON MK1, 1958

What better symbolized the American Way than a top-down roadster with a foot-thick radiation shield and enough canned bologna in the back-seat fallout shelter to feed the whole gang—long after friends and neighbors had all starved to death? Driving through a devastated nuclear moonscape in the luxury of the Armageddon MK1: What a car! What a dream!



BUMSMOBILE GOLD RUSH XPRESS, 1958

The Bumsmobile was designed to carry nine players and the complete equipment of a major-league ball club in its rear Dugout Cargo Deck from Brooklyn to Los Angeles in high style. Oddly, its first appearance—at the Dodgers' final game at Ebbets Field, in September of 1957—was its last. Mobbed by incensed Bums fans, it vanished before it reached the Brooklyn Bridge—another enduring and mysterious bit of Dodgers lore.

FICTION

GIRL WITH LIZARD

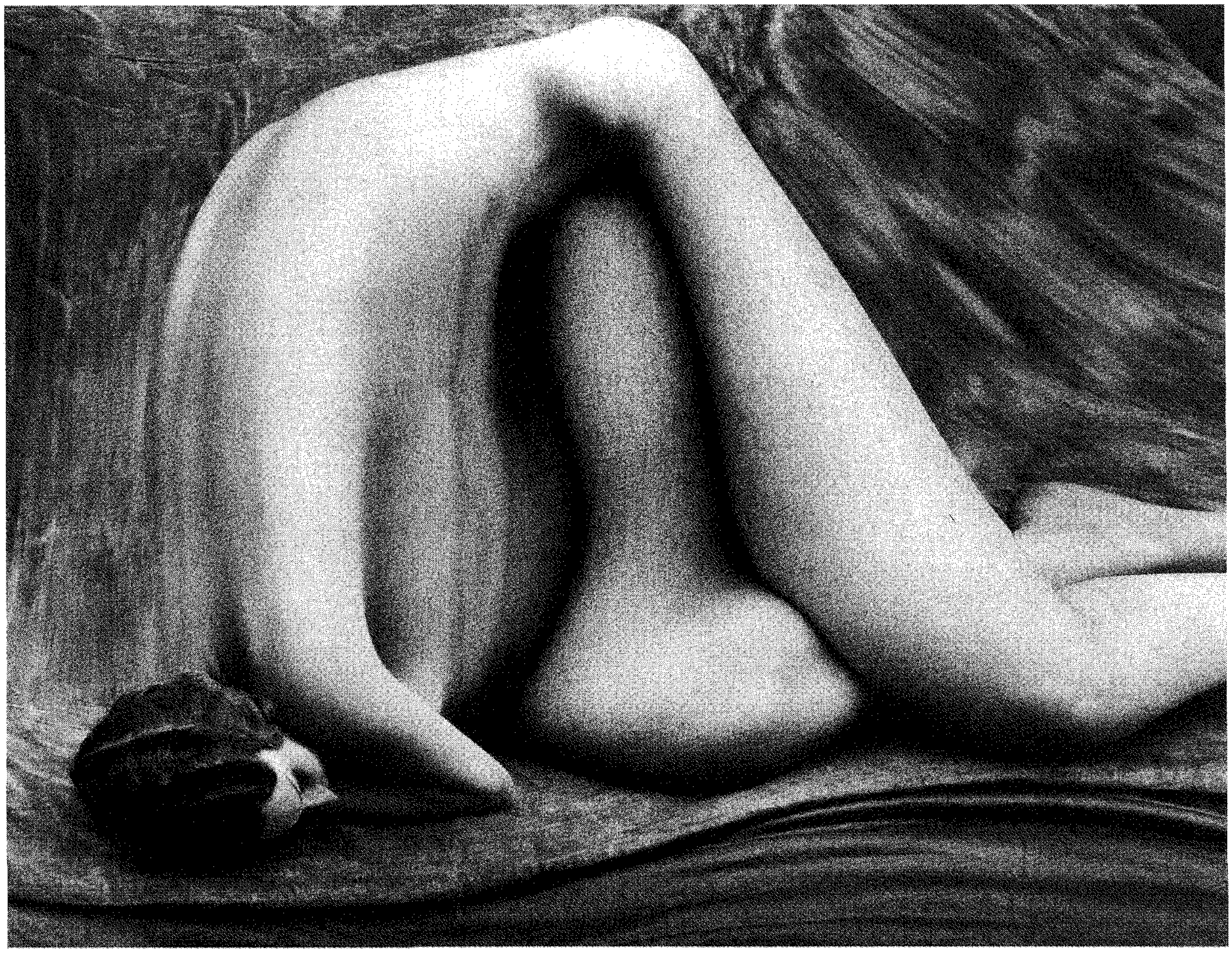
BY BERNHARD SCHLINK

It was a painting of a girl with a lizard. They were looking at each other and not looking at each other, the girl gazing dreamily toward the lizard, the lizard directing its vacant, glistening eyes toward the girl. Because the girl's thoughts were somewhere else, she was holding so still that even the lizard sat motionless on the moss-grown rock, on which the girl lay half leaning, half stretched out on her stomach. The lizard's head was lifted; its tongue stuck out.

"That Jewish girl," the boy's mother said whenever she spoke of the girl in the painting. When his parents argued and his father got up to retreat to his study, where the painting was hung, she would call after him, "Go pay your Jewish girl a visit!" Or she would ask, "Does the painting of that Jewish girl have to hang there? Does the boy have to sleep under the painting of that Jewish girl?" The painting hung above a couch where the boy napped at noontime while his father read the paper.

More than once, he had heard his father explain to his mother that the girl was not Jewish. That the red velvet cap she wore, pressed so firmly down into her brown curls that they almost hid it, wasn't meant to suggest her religion, wasn't a folk costume but a matter of fashion. "It's what girls wore back then. Besides, it's the Jewish men who wear caps, not the women."

The girl wore a dark-red skirt, and over her bright-yellow blouse was a dark-yellow vest, a kind of bodice loosely laced with ribbons at the back. The rock on which the girl rested her chin and her plump, childish arms hid much of her clothes and body. She might have been eight years old. The face was a child's face. But the eyes, the full lips, and the hair, which curled against the brow and fell to cover her back and shoulders, were those not of a child but of a woman. The shadow that



her hair cast over cheek and temple was a secret, and the darkness of the puffed sleeve into which the bare upper arm vanished a temptation. Behind the rock and a sliver of beach, the sea stretched away to the horizon and surged into the foreground on rolling breakers; sunlight piercing the dark clouds left its lustre on a patch of glistening sea and on the girl's face and arms. Nature breathed passion.

Or was this ironic? The passion, the temptation, the secret, and the woman in the child? Was it the ambiguity in the painting that not only fascinated the boy but also confused him? He was often confused. He was confused when his parents argued, when his mother asked her sarcastic questions, and when his father smoked a cigar and read his paper, trying to look relaxed and superior, although the air in his study was so charged that the boy scarcely dared move or even breathe. And his mother's mocking words about the Jewish girl were confusing. The boy had no idea what a Jewish girl was.

From one day to the next, his mother stopped talking about the Jewish girl and his father put an end to the obligatory naps in the study. For a while, the boy had to nap in the same room and bed where he slept at night. Then there were no more naps at all. He was glad. He was nine and had been made to nap at noontime longer than any of his classmates or playmates.

But he missed the girl with the lizard. He would steal into his father's study to have a look at the painting and talk with the girl for a moment. He grew fast that year; at first his eyes were level with the gold frame, then with the rock, and later with the girl's eyes.

He was a strong boy, sturdily built, with large-boned limbs. As he shot up, there was nothing touching about his awkwardness; instead, it was somehow threatening. His schoolmates were afraid of him, even when he was on their side in games, arguments, and fights. He was an outsider. He knew that himself, although he did not know that it was his appearance, his height, broad shoulders, and strength, that made him one. He thought it was the world inside him, with which he coexisted and in which he lived. None of his schoolmates shared it with him. But, then, he did not invite any of them in. Had he been a delicate child, he might have found playmates, soul mates, among other delicate children. But they, especially, were intimidated by him.

His inner world was populated not only with figures from his reading and from pictures and films but also with people from the outside world, though in ever-changing disguises. He could tell when there was a discrepancy between what seemed to be going on in the external world and whatever lay behind it. That his piano teacher was holding something back, that the friendliness of the beloved family doctor was not genuine, that a neighbor boy with whom he played was hiding something—he felt it long before the disclosure of the boy's petty thefts, of the doctor's fondness for little boys, or of the piano teacher's illness. To be sure, he was no more acute than others, or quicker to intuit exactly what it was that was not evident. Nor did he investigate it. He preferred making things up, and his inventions were always more colorful and exciting than reality.

The distance between his inner and outer worlds corresponded to the distance that the boy noticed between his family and other people. Certainly, his father, a judge of the municipal court, lived life to the full. The boy was aware that his father enjoyed the importance and visibility of his position, liked joining the regular table reserved for prominent citizens in the local restaurant, liked playing a role in local politics and being elected to the presbytery of his congregation. His parents took part in the town's social life. They attended the carnival ball and the summer gala, were invited out, and asked guests to dine at their home. The boy's birthdays were celebrated in proper style, with five guests at his fifth birthday, six at his sixth, and so forth. Indeed, everything was done in proper style, which meant with the obligatory formality and distance of the nineteen-fifties. It was not this formality or distance that the boy perceived as the distance between his family and other people, but something else. It had to do with the way his parents themselves seemed to be holding back, hiding something. They were on their guard. If someone told a joke, they did not immediately burst out laughing but waited until others laughed. At a concert or a play, they applauded only after others had applauded first. In conversations with guests, they kept their own opinions to themselves until others had expressed the same thing and they could then second it. If sometimes his father could not avoid taking a position or expressing an opinion, the strain of it showed.

Or was his father merely being tactful, trying not to interfere or seem obtrusive? The boy asked himself that question as he grew older and began more consciously to observe his parents' caution. He also asked himself why it was that his parents insisted on their own space. He was not allowed to enter his parents' bedroom, had not been even as a small child. Granted, they did not lock their door. But the prohibition was absolutely clear, and their authority remained unchallenged—that is, until the boy was thirteen and, one day when his parents were out, he opened the door and saw two separate beds, two nightstands, two chairs, and two wardrobes, one wooden and one metal. Were his parents trying to hide the fact that they did not share a bed? Did they want to inculcate in him the meaning of privacy and a respect for it? After all, they never entered his room, either, without first knocking and waiting for him to invite them in.

The boy was not forbidden to enter his father's study, even though it contained a mystery, the painting of the girl with the lizard.

But, when he was in the eighth grade, a teacher assigned as homework the description of a picture. The choice of pictures was left to the students. "Do I have to bring the picture I describe with me?" one student asked. The teacher waved the question aside. "Your description should be so good that just by reading it we can see the picture." It was obvious to the boy that he would describe the painting of the girl with the lizard. He was looking forward to it, to examining the painting in detail, to translating the painting into words and sentences, to reading his description of the painting to his teacher and classmates. He was also looking forward to sitting in his father's study. It looked out on a narrow courtyard that muted the daylight and sounds from the street. Its walls were lined with bookcases, and the spicy, acrid odor of cigar smoke hung in the air.

His father hadn't come home for

ANDRÉ KERTÉSZ, "DISTORTION NO. 147" (1933)/©FRENCH MINISTRY OF CULTURE

lunch; his mother had left for town immediately afterward. So the boy asked no one for permission but sat down in his father's study, looked, and wrote. "The painting shows the sea, in front of it a beach, in front of that a rock or a dune, and on it a girl and a lizard." No, the teacher had said the description of a painting moves from the foreground to the middle distance to the background. "In the foreground of the painting are a girl and a lizard on a rock or a dune, in the middle distance is a beach, and from the middle distance to the background is the sea." Is the sea? Rolls the sea? But the sea didn't roll from the middle distance to the background, it rolled from the background toward the middle distance. Besides, middle distance sounded ugly, and foreground and background didn't sound much better. And the girl—was her being in the foreground everything there was to say about her?

The boy started over. "The painting shows a girl. She is looking at a lizard." But that still wasn't everything there was to say about the girl. The boy went on. "The girl has a pale face and pale arms, brown hair, and is dressed in a bright-colored top and a dark skirt." That didn't satisfy him, either. He gave it another try. "In this painting a girl is looking at a lizard sunning itself." Was that true? Was the girl looking at the lizard? Wasn't she looking past it, through it, instead? The boy hesitated. But suddenly it made no difference. Because the next sentence followed from the first. "The girl is very beautiful." That sentence was true, and with it the description likewise began to ring true.

"The painting shows a girl looking at a lizard sunning itself. The girl is very beautiful. She has a delicate face with a smooth brow, straight nose, and a dimple above her upper lip. She has brown eyes and brown, curly hair. The painting is really only of the girl's head. All the rest, comprising the lizard, the rock or dune, the beach, and the sea, is not so important."

The boy was satisfied. Now all he had to do was to place everything in the foreground, middle distance, and background. He was proud of "comprising." It sounded elegant and adult. He was proud of the girl's beauty.

When he heard his father closing the front door, he stayed seated. He heard him put down his briefcase, remove and hang up his coat, look first in the kitchen and living room, and then knock on his bedroom door.

"I'm in here," he called, squaring the scribbled pages on top of his notebook and laying his fountain pen beside it. That was how his father kept files, papers, and pens on the desk. When the door opened, he immediately started to explain. "I'm sitting here because we've been assigned the description of a picture, and I'm describing this painting here."

It took his father a moment to reply. "What painting? What are you doing?"

The boy explained again. From the way his father was standing there, scowling as he looked at him and the painting, he knew that he had done something wrong. "Since you weren't here, I thought . . ."

"You thought—" his father said in a choked voice, and the boy thought the voice threatened to become a yell, and flinched. But his father did not yell. He shook his head and sat down on the swivel chair between the desk and a table that he used for stacking files. The boy was sitting on the other side. The painting hung beside the desk, behind his father. The boy hadn't dared to sit at the desk. "Would you like to read me what you've written?"

The boy read it aloud, both proud and anxious.

"It's very well written, my boy. I could see every detail of the painting. But . . ." he hesitated. "It's not for other people. You should describe a different picture for them."

The boy was so happy that his father hadn't yelled at him, but had instead spoken to him in confidence and with affection, that he was willing to do anything. But he did not understand. "Why isn't the painting something for other people?"

"Don't you keep things just to yourself sometimes? Do you want us or your friends to be part of everything you do? If only because people are envious, it's best not to show them your treasures. Either it makes them sad because they don't have them, or they turn greedy and want to take them away from you."

"Is this painting a treasure?"

"You know that yourself. You just described it beautifully, as only a beautiful treasure is described."

"I mean is it so valuable that it would make people envious?"

His father turned around and looked at the painting. "Yes, it's worth a great deal, and I don't know if I could protect it if people wanted to steal it. Wouldn't it be better if they didn't even know we have it?"

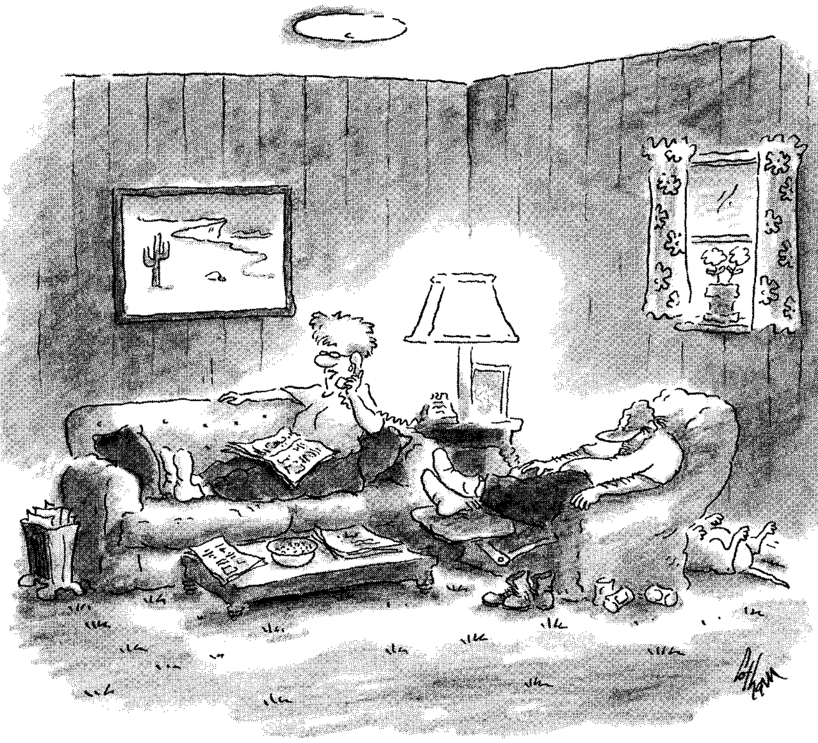
The boy nodded.

"Come, let's look at a book of paintings together. We're sure to find one you like."

When the boy turned fourteen, his father resigned from the bench and took a job with an insurance company. He didn't want to do it—the boy could tell that, although his father didn't complain. But neither did his father explain why he had changed jobs. The boy didn't find that out until years later. One result of the change was that they had to give up their old apartment for a new one. Instead of occupying the fashionable second floor of a four-story turn-of-the-century town house, they now lived on the edge of town in a twenty-four-unit apartment house, built with subsidies from a government program, according to its norms. The four rooms were small, the ceilings low, and the sounds and smells of neighbors ever present. But at least there were four rooms; in addition to a living room and two bedrooms, there was a study for his father. Come evening, he would retreat to it, even though he no longer brought files home from work.

"You can drink in the living room just as well," the boy heard his mother say to his father one evening, "and maybe you'd drink less if you exchanged a word with me sometimes."

His parents' way of life changed, too. There were no more dinners and evening parties for ladies and gentlemen, when the boy would open the door for guests and take their coats. He missed the atmosphere of the dining room, the table set with white china and adorned with silver candelabra, his parents putting out glasses, pastries, cigars, and ashtrays in the living room, awaiting the first ring of the doorbell. He missed several of his parents' friends. Some would ask how he was doing in school and what interests he had, and on their next visit they'd remember his answers and keep track. A surgeon had discussed operations on Teddy bears with him, and a geologist had talked about volcano eruptions, earthquakes, and shifting sand dunes. He especially missed one woman friend of his parents'. Unlike his slender, nervous, volatile mother, she was a plump woman of sunny temperament. In the winter, when he was still small, she would sweep him in under her fur coat, into the shimmering caress of its silk lining and the overwhelming scent of her perfume. Later, she had teased him about conquests he had not made, about girlfriends he did not have, leaving him both embarrassed and proud. And even in later years, when she sometimes made a game of pulling him to her and wrapping them both in her fur coat, he had enjoyed the softness of her body.



"His snoring is just loud enough to mask my tinnitus."

It was a long time before new guests came. These were neighbors, colleagues of his father from the insurance company, and colleagues of his mother, who was now working as a police-department secretary. The boy noticed that his parents seemed uncertain; they wanted to find their way into their new world without denying the old, and acted either too cool or too intimate.

The boy had to adjust as well. His parents had him transferred from his high school, just a few steps from their old home, to one that was not very far from their new apartment. And so his way of life changed, too. The tone of his new school was coarser, and he was less of an outsider than he had been in the old one. For another year, he continued taking piano lessons from the teacher who lived near his former home. Then his parents said he was making wretched progress, and they ended the lessons and sold the piano. The bike rides to his piano teacher's had been precious to him, for he would pass his old apartment and a neighboring building where there was a girl he used to walk partway to school and play with now and then. She had thick, red, curly hair down to her shoulders, and a face full of freckles. He rode slowly past her building, hoping she would step outside and say hello, and then he would walk his bike alongside her, and they would, of course, end up seeing each other again. They wouldn't exactly make a date, but it would be clear when he would find her where. She was far too young for a real date.

But she never came out of the building when he rode by.

It is a mistake to believe that people make decisions about their lives only once they are, or have, grown up. Children take actions and adopt attitudes with the same decisiveness as adults. They don't stay with their decisions forever, but adults cast aside decisions about their lives, too.

A year later, the boy decided to be somebody in his new school and circumstances. He was strong enough to have no trouble earning respect, and since he was also clever and inventive, he soon became part of a hierarchy, which in his class, as in every school class, was defined by an amorphous mixture of strength, impudence, wit, and parental affluence. These things counted with the girls, too—not in his own school, which had no girls, but in the girls' high school a couple of blocks away.

The boy did not fall in love. He picked out a girl who was popular and provocatively attractive, quick with a smart remark, and who allowed herself to be known as having had experience with boys but also was hard to get. He impressed her with his strength, with the respect he was shown—and the fact that there was something more. She didn't know what this "more" was, but there was something she hadn't found in other boys, and this she wanted to see and to have. He noticed, and would occasionally drop a hint that he had treasures he didn't show to just anyone, but that he might show to her if . . . if she would go steady with him? Neck with him? Sleep with him? He didn't exactly know himself. His public pursuit of her, to which she yielded increasingly, was more interesting, brought him greater rewards and prestige, than what actually happened between them. Sauntering with friends past the girls' high school, where she and her group would sometimes be leaning against the iron gate after classes, and where he would casually put his arm around her, or if her team was playing handball waving to her and getting a kiss

Specials
Café
B. Smaller

"On the plus side, I have much more free time now that I'm not always defending Clinton."

• •

blown in return, or crossing the grass on the way to the swimming pool with her, admired and envied—that was the thing.

When they finally did sleep together, it was a disaster. She was experienced enough to have certain expectations, but not enough to deal with his clumsiness. He lacked the assurance that comes with love and makes up for the awkwardness of the first time. Once the swimming pool had closed and the guard had made his rounds, and they were together behind the bushes near the fence, it suddenly seemed all wrong to him—the kisses, the tenderness, the desire. Nothing was right. It was a betrayal of everything he loved and had loved. He thought of his mother, of her friend in the fur coat, of the neighbor girl with the red curls and freckles, and of the girl with the lizard. When it was all over—the embarrassment of dealing with the condom, his orgasm, which had happened far too fast, his inept and merely irritating attempts to satisfy her with his hand—he cuddled up to her, seeking consolation for his own failure. She stood up, dressed, and left. He lay there in a huddle, staring at the trunk of the bush he was lying under, at last year's leaves, at his underwear and the mesh of the fence. It turned dark. He went on lying there, even though he was cold now, as if he could somehow shiver away his being with her, pursuing her, struggling conceitedly to win her these past few months, the way you sweat out an illness. Finally, he got up and swam a few laps in the main pool.

When he came home, around midnight, the door to the lighted study was open. His father was lying on the couch, snoring and reeking of alcohol. A bookcase had been overturned, and the drawers of the desk were open and empty, the floor was strewn with books and papers. The boy made sure the painting hadn't been damaged, turned out the light, and closed the door.

When school was almost over and he was just waiting for diplomas to be handed out, he took a trip to the nearest large city. It was an hour and a half by train, a trip he could have taken at any time all those years for a concert, a play, an art exhibition, but never had. When he was small, his parents had once taken him and shown him the churches, the town hall, the courthouse, and the large park in the center of the city. After their move, his parents did not travel anymore, whether with or without him, and at first it had never occurred to him to travel alone. Later, he couldn't afford it. His father lost his job because of his drinking, and the boy had to work as well as go to school, handing over any money he earned. Now that he was graduating and would soon leave town, he was beginning to separate from his parents. And he now wanted to spend what he earned.

He wasn't looking for the museum of modern art but found it by chance. He went in, because the building fascinated him with its strange mixture of modern simplicity on the one hand and inhospitable, cavelike gloominess on the other, while the doors and oriels were playfully kitschy. The collection ranged from the Impressionists to the New Savages, and he looked at it all with proper attentiveness but little sympathy. Until he happened on the painting by René Dalmann.

"At the Beach" was the title, and it showed a rock, a sandy beach, and the sea. A girl, naked and beautiful, was doing a handstand on the rock, but one of her legs was made of wood—not a wooden leg but a female leg of perfectly grained wood. No, he did not recognize the girl doing the handstand as the girl with the lizard, nor could he say that it was the same rock, the same beach, the same sea. But it all reminded him so powerfully of the painting at home that he bought a postcard as he left and, had he had more money, he would have bought a book on René Dalmann. The differences between painting and postcard were obvious when he compared the two at home. And yet there was something that linked them—was it merely in the eye of the beholder or was it in the paintings themselves?

"What have you got there?" His father entered the room and reached for the postcard.

The boy stepped aside and let his father grab at thin air. "Who painted our painting?"

His father's gaze turned cautious. He'd been drinking, and it was the same caution with which he reacted to the rejection and open disdain his wife and son showed him whenever he was sloshed. They had long ago lost any fear of him. "I don't know—why?"

"Why haven't we sold the painting if it's so valuable?"

"Sold? We can't sell the painting!" His father took up a position in front of the painting as if to protect it from his son.

"Why can't we?"

"Then we wouldn't have anything. And you'd get nothing when I'm gone. It's for you that we're keeping the painting, for you." Delighted by an argument that would surely persuade his son, his father repeated it, then said it yet again. "Mother and I are turning ourselves inside out to be sure you'll get the painting someday. And what do I get in return? Ingratitude, nothing but ingratitude."

The boy left his whining father standing there and forgot the whole incident, the picture in the museum, and René Dalmann. Besides working in the warehouse of a tractor factory, the boy moonlighted as a waiter until the beginning of the semester, and then left to study as far from home as possible. The city on the Baltic was ugly and its university mediocre. But nothing there reminded him of his home town in the south. In his first weeks, he realized, much to his relief, that he recognized no one in his law courses, or the cafeteria, or the halls. He could start all over again.

He had made one stop on his way there. He had only a few hours to walk through the city by the river. Again, it was purely by chance that he found the museum. But, once inside, chance was not enough, and he asked right away for pictures by René Dalmann, and found two of them. "Order Restored After War" was five by six and a half feet high and showed a woman sitting on the ground, head bent forward, legs drawn up, propping herself on her left arm. With her right hand she was pushing a drawer back into her abdomen; her breasts and belly were drawers as well, with nipples as knobs for the former and her navel as the pull for the latter. The drawers at her breasts and stomach were slightly open, and empty, but beneath them, in the abdomen drawer, lay a dead soldier, twisted and mutilated. The other painting was entitled "Self-Portrait as Woman" and showed the bust of a smiling young man with a shaved head; the outline of breasts was visible beneath his buttoned-up black jacket, and in his left hand he held up a curly blond wig.

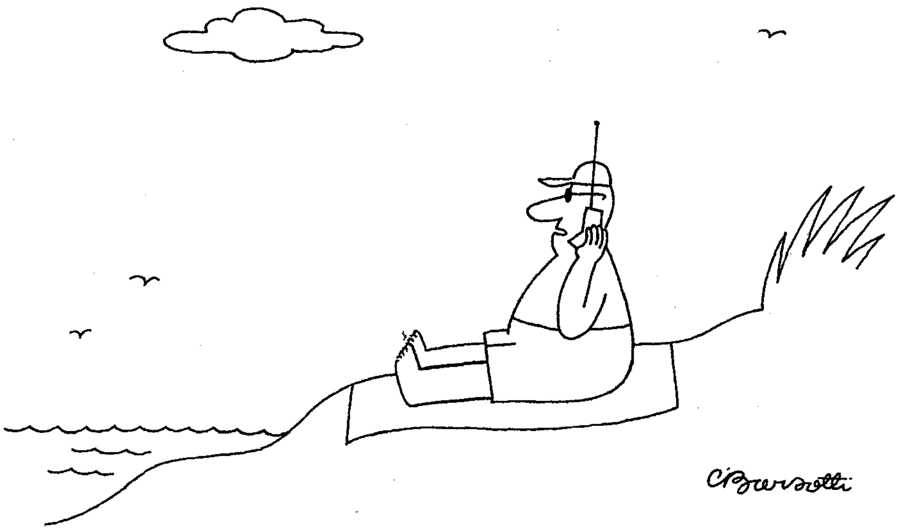
This time he bought a book on René Dalmann, and on the train he read about the childhood and youth of the artist, who was born in Strasbourg in 1894. Both the father, a textile merchant who had left Leipzig for Strasbourg, and his Alsatian wife, twenty years his junior, had wanted a daughter; they already had two sons, and a third child, a daughter, had died, two years previously, after her father had taken her for a winter ride and she had come down with pneumonia. René grew up in the shadow of his dead sister, until, in 1902, the second daughter, so longed for, arrived—a liberation and a humiliation in one. He started drawing and painting early on, could not keep up in school, but at age sixteen applied successfully for the art academy in Karlsruhe.

Then the trip was over. The boy found a room, a garret with a coal stove and a little window; the toilet with a tiny sink was half a flight of stairs down. But he was on his own. He moved his things in and put the book on René Dalmann on a bottom shelf along with other favorites. The top shelves were to be for new books, for his new life. He had left nothing he cared about at home.

His father died during the boy's third year at the university. As was increasingly his father's habit in the last few years, he had gone to drink at a bar. He tripped on his way home, fell down an embankment, and froze to death lying there. The funeral was the boy's first visit home since he had left for the university. It was January, the wind piercing cold, the puddles on the path to the cemetery chapel frozen, and, after having slipped and almost fallen, his mother accepted his arm, which she had previously refused to do. She didn't want to forgive him for not having visited for so long.

At home, she had made tea and little sandwiches for the few neighbors who had joined them at the cemetery. When she realized that the guests were expecting alcohol to be served, she stood up. "Anyone who's offended because I'm not offering beer or schnapps can leave right now. There's been enough drinking in this house."

That evening, mother and son entered the study. "I think they're all law books. Do you want them? Can you use them? What you don't take I'll throw out." She left him alone. He examined the library his father had made such a to-do about—books in obsolete editions, periodicals discontinued years before. The only picture was the girl with the lizard. In the old apartment it had had the entire wall above the couch to itself, but here it was hung between two bookcases—and still it dominated the room. His head almost brushed the low ceiling, so that he looked down at the girl now, but he remembered how they had once stood eye to eye. He thought of Christmas trees, how they used to be so tall and were so small



"*You can speak freely—this is a private beach.*"

now. But then he thought of how the painting had not grown smaller, had lost none of its power to enthrall him. And he thought of the little girl in the house where he had his garret, and blushed. He called her Princess, and they flirted with each other, and when she asked him if he wouldn't like to show her his room, he had summoned all his will power and said no. She had asked in all innocence. But, because she wanted something he didn't want to give, she flirted with him so openly, and her voice and glances and body language were so seductive that he all but forgot the innocence.

"I don't want Father's books. But I'll call a used-book dealer tomorrow. He'll give you several hundred or a thousand marks." He sat down at the kitchen table with his mother. "What do you plan to do with the painting?"

She folded up the newspaper she'd been reading. Her gestures were still nervous and volatile, with something yet youthful about them. She was no longer slender but gaunt, the skin stretched tight over the bones of her face and hands. Her hair was almost white.

He was suddenly filled with sympathy and tenderness. "What do you intend to do?" he asked gently, and tried to lay his hand on hers, but she drew it away.

"I'm moving out. They've built a couple of terraced houses on the slope, and I bought myself a studio there. I don't need more than one room."

"Bought?"

She cast him a hostile look. "I always pooled your father's pension and my earnings, and took out the same amount for myself that he drank up. Do you have any objection?"

"No." He laughed. "Father drank up a studio apartment in just ten years?"

His mother laughed with him. "Not quite. But more than the down payment I saved up."

He hesitated. "Why did you stay with Father?"

"What a question." She shook her head. "For a while you have a choice. Do you want to do this or that, live with this person or that? But one day what it is you're doing and that person you live with have become your life, and to ask why you stick with your life is to ask a rather stupid question. But you asked about the painting. I don't plan to do anything with it. Take it with you or put it in the bank, if they have lockboxes big enough."

"Tell me, what's the story with the painting?"

"Oh, my boy . . ." She looked at him sadly. "I'd rather not. I think your father was proud of the painting, to the end." She gave him a weary smile. "He would so much have liked to visit you and see how you were doing with your law studies, but he didn't dare. You never invited us. You know, you children are no less cruel than we parents were. You're more self-righteous, that's all."

He wanted to protest, but did not know if she was right. "I'm sorry," he said, dodging the issue.

She stood up. "Sleep tight, my boy. I'll be out of the house by seven. Sleep as long as you want before you leave, but don't forget the painting."

He hung the picture over his bed in the garret. The bed stood against the left wall; on the right were his wardrobe and bookcase, and at the front, under the dormer, his desk.

"I look a lot like her. Who is she?" The girl who asked was a student he had taken a liking to in his first semester. Because of her resemblance to the girl in the painting? He hadn't been aware of it.

"I don't know who she is. Or whether she's anybody, really." He wanted to add, "But in any case you're more beautiful." But, then, he didn't want to be unfaithful to the girl with the lizard. Can you be unfaithful to a girl in a painting?

"What do you think?"

"That you're beautiful."

She was very beautiful. He was lying on his back on the bed, she was lying on top of him, her arms across his chest and her chin propped on her arms as she gazed calmly into his eyes. Or was she looking past him, through him? Her dark eyes and hair, her high brow, the fresh blush on her cheeks, the curve of her nostrils and lips—she was, in all her beauty, attuned to him and yet peculiarly caught up in herself. Or was he just imagining this? Would the woman he loved, just because he loved her, become the painting? Attuned to him and yet unattainable at the same time?

"Who's the painter?"

"I don't know."

"He must have signed his painting." She sat up and closely examined the painting, then she looked at him.

"Do you know what it's worth?"

"No."

"Maybe it's valuable. Where did you get it?"

He thought of the conversation he'd had with his father years before. "Come here." He spread his arms. "I don't want to know if it's valuable. If I knew it was

IN DREAMS

Sometimes, in a dream, I'll find myself
avoiding the reckless choices I would
in life also turn away from. And I'll think:
But this is a dream, you can do what you want.

But I can't, and even trying
to manage whatever loopy story
is tonight's production means I'm just
that much closer to waking up. Thus thought

is shown to be the enemy of action.
Which we knew already. I turn a corner,
certain I'm being followed. Pursued.
Chased by a vampire. Who keeps gaining on me

until I see these huge doors swinging open.
A concert's about to begin. I sit down
next to a beautiful woman. She turns to me
and smiles, and touches my arm. Then

I'm somewhere else, maybe it's her place.
She's unbuttoning her blouse, I'm telling her
I'm married, and my waking self is crying out—
No, no, don't do that! But it's too late,

she's gone. Do I feel virtuous?
Not even a little. What did she look like?
I don't remember. Like no one. But for a moment
I can feel the place where she touched me,

on my wrist, near the vein. In this way
the past returns, dressed up
as a ragged troupe of actors trapped
in their most famous roles. The callow youth.

The worried, untested knight.
The terrible monster. The beautiful woman
without mercy. Poor ghosts,
whose deepest wishes must be sleep.

—*Lawrence Raab*

and told you so, then you'd know it, and I'd have to keep asking myself if you love me because of my painting."

She fell into his arms. "Don't be silly. If it's valuable, you can't keep it here. It's too hot in the summer and too cold in the winter, and besides, your stupid stove will set the roof and the whole house on fire someday, and maybe you'll be able to escape to the roof next door but the painting will burn up. A valuable painting needs the same constant temperature and humidity and who knows what else. And since you can't keep it here, you might as well sell it. You work and work and never buy anything for yourself, because you don't have any money. That doesn't make any sense."

To divert her, he told her about his new job. But as she was leaving she asked, "You know what?"

"What?"

"My brother is studying art history. He ought to have a look at the painting."

He didn't let it come to that. Before her next visit, he shoved the painting under the bed and told her that his mother had wanted it back. But she still had a talk with her brother, who could think of no similar painting or painter who fit her description of it but did make a connection to the magazine *Lézard Violet*, ten issues of which had been published in Paris, between 1924 and 1930, during the transition from Dadaism to Surrealism. Then she forgot about the painting.

Whenever she left, he would hang it over his bed again. At first it was a game; he took the painting down with a smile and hung it back up with a smile, saying goodbye to the girl and greeting her with some passing joke. Then he got tired of taking the painting down because the other girl was coming, then of her coming at all. After they had made love and were lying side by side again, he would wait for her to leave, so that he could rehang the picture and take up life where he had left off.

Finally she left him. "I don't know what goes on in your head or your heart." She tapped his forehead, then his chest. "There's probably room in there for me somewhere. But it's too small."

It hurt more than he had expected. He felt angry at times—perhaps everything would have turned out differently and better without the painting. But his anger also bound him to the painting. He talked to the girl. How he'd be better off without her. What a mess she'd got him into. It wouldn't hurt her to look at him with a friendlier eye now. And was she proud of having successfully driven her rival from the field? She had no reason to brag.

One evening, he picked up the book on René Dalmann and read some more. After completing work at the academy, the young artist lived in the house of a rich widow from Karlsruhe who set up a studio for him. In so proper a provincial capital, that meant a scandal, which, according to his biographer, they both enjoyed more than they did their troubled relationship. Dalmann tried to establish himself as a portrait painter, and his first portraits were conventional enough, until, accused of leading a scandalous life, he began to paint scandalous portraits—the chief justice of the Karlsruhe High Court with his bureaucrat's skull carved out of wood, and the man's son, a dashing lieutenant, with epaulettes, shoulder braid, and a sabre in the middle of his face. The chief justice filed suit, which René Dalmann evaded by departing for Brittany, where, with his parents and siblings, he had spent many a vacation, in a house owned by his mother's family, most of whom had fled Alsace in 1871. He remained there until the outbreak of the war, in which he served as a volunteer in the French medical corps. These were the years of his sketches; he had neither time nor money for anything else. Besides wounded, maimed, and dying soldiers, there were also religious motifs—Adam and Eve as a bridal couple lost in a battlefield Paradise, the healing of a crippled soldier by a crippled Christ. After the war, the artist lived in Paris and spent a good deal of his time in the Café Certa—though he never joined the Dadaists—and with André Breton, who won him over to the Communist Party but could not persuade him to join the Surrealists. He held himself apart, until he founded the *Lézard Violet* with a few friends. René Magritte contributed an article on painting as thinking, Salvador Dali one on how they sliced the girl's eye, and, without the author's permission, the periodical printed an English translation of a short essay on collectivism that Max Beckmann had written on his honeymoon. René Dalmann himself wrote about liberating the imagination from the grip of the arbitrary and was in charge of the magazine's graphic design.

He found all this only moderately interesting. Finally he gave up reading and merely browsed. At the end of the book were a few pages of a chronology of

René Dalmann's life, a bibliography, including works by him, and a list of his exhibitions. This contained an entry for an exhibition called "Est-ce qu'il y a un surréalisme allemand?" shown by the Galerie Colle in Paris in 1933, with a note that the catalogue cover was "Lizard and Girl," by René Dalmann. Lizard and girl.

The next morning, he went to his university's art-history institute and looked in vain for a copy of the 1933 catalogue. He cut his lectures, called in sick with the flu at the restaurant where he was supposed to wait tables at lunchtime, and took a train to the city, where he'd seen René Dalmann's self-portrait and postwar paintings and bought the book about him. There was a university in the city as well, and an art-history institute, but there was no catalogue at either one. By now he was in a state of feverish excitement. The librarian noticed and asked him what was wrong. He explained that he was searching for René Dalmann's "Lizard and Girl" and couldn't find a catalogue that had the painting on its cover. Where might the next nearest art-history institute be?

"Why does it have to be the catalogue cover?"

He stared in incomprehension.

"Presumably he photographed his painting himself, as did his gallerist, the press, and the museum where it hangs."

"You think it's hanging in a museum? Where?"

"We have a photo archive. Come with me."

He followed her down a long corridor to a room with a projector and boxes labelled with names. He grew calmer. He even noticed the librarian's nice figure and light step and the way she was observing his excitement with a cheerful glance of well-intentioned mockery. She pulled a box from the shelf, studied a list pasted to the inside of the lid, selected a slide almost the size of a postcard, framed in black foil, and slipped it into the projector. "Would you get the light?"

He found the switch and darkened the room. She turned on the projector.

"My God," he said. It was his painting. The girl, the beach, the rock. But leaning into view from the left wasn't the girl but a giant lizard, and it wasn't the lizard sunning on the rock but a tiny girl, adorable, with dark curls and pale face, bright bodice and dark skirt. She lay on one side, her head on her arm, half kittenish child, half seductive woman.

"What museum is the painting in?"

"We'll have to look up front." The librarian turned off the projector, put the slide back in its box, and returned to the reference room. He watched her take one or two volumes from the shelf and thumb through them. "Will this at least earn me an invitation to dinner?" She went on flipping through the pages. "Oh!"

"What is it?"

"The painting isn't in a museum. It's missing. Missing and maybe even destroyed. It was last seen in 1937 at the exhibition of 'Degenerate Art' in Munich."

He looked blank.

"It was shown in Group Five. Here's what they said: 'Pornography needs no nakedness, and degeneration needs no distortion of the painter's craft. With perfect brushstrokes, the Jew can present the German entrepreneur as a capitalist wastrel and a German maiden as a lewd harlot. Filthiness and the Marxist fondness for class warfare go hand in hand for Jews. When one realizes that German mothers and women will also attend this exhibition . . .' Should I go on?"

"Is there also a painting by René Dalmann called 'Girl with Lizard'?"

She paged. "How about dinner?"

"When are you through here?"

"At four."

"But there won't be any dinner then."

"And there won't be any girl with a lizard, either. Are you sure that's the title?"

"No." His father and mother had called the painting that; so had he. René Dalmann might have called it something else. "But it shows a girl and a lizard, just the opposite of what we just saw."

"Interesting. Where did you see it?"

"Oh, I don't remember." He had not been paying attention, had gone too far. Had asked more than he should. Luckily, he hadn't mentioned his name. He would vanish without a trace.

She watched his mind race. "What's up with you?"

"I have to go. I'll be waiting for you at four downstairs, O.K.?"

He flew out of the institute, not caring how ridiculous he looked. But, as he sat on a bench beside a lake in the center of town, it became clear to him just how much he didn't know and needed to learn. So at four o'clock he was standing at the entrance to the art-history institute. She came down the steps and again shot him that look of amiable mockery. "Lizards are shy creatures," she said.

"I think I need to explain some things. Would you like to sit in the sun by the lake?" On the way there, he began to tell her. As a law student, he worked part time for a lawyer whose specialty was wills and estates, disputes between heirs, locating heirs, evaluating heirlooms. Among the effects of a deceased American, a painting had shown up without provenance, without signature, perhaps of no value whatever, but perhaps worth a great deal, and he was to find out what he could about the painting.

"An American?"

He had spread out his jacket, and they were sitting on the lawn by the lake. "A German émigré whose heirs we're looking for in Germany."

"Do you have a reproduction of the painting?"

"Not with me. I've got the painting down in my head well enough." He described it.

"Hey," she said with a sidelong glance, "you're really in love with that painting."

He blushed and turned his head away, pretending to watch a sailboat.

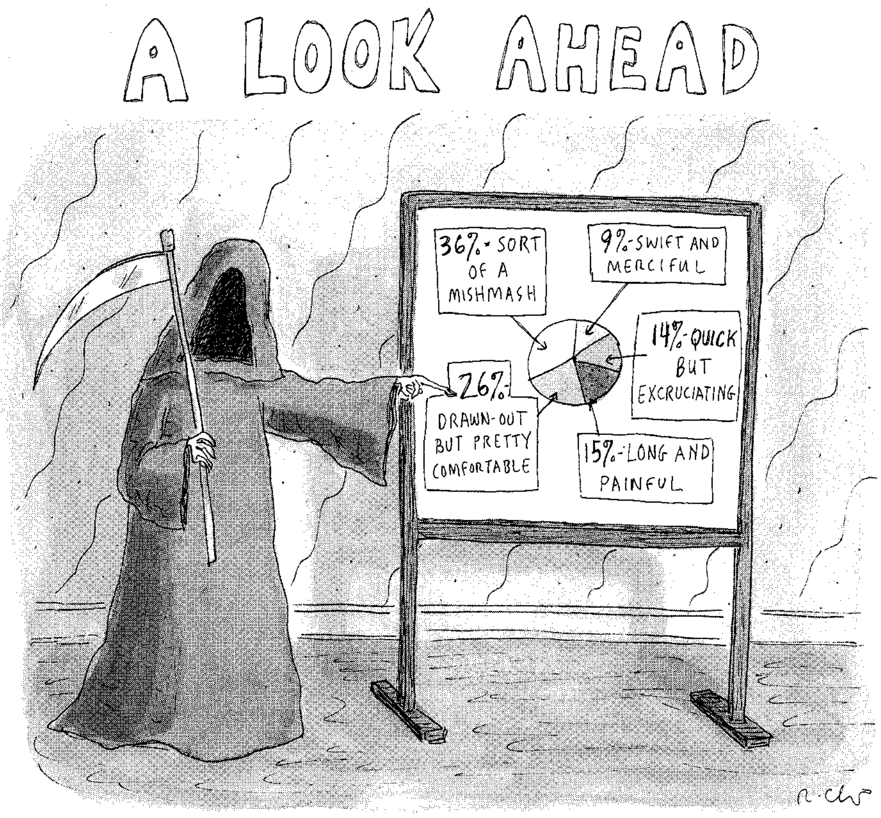
"It doesn't matter. If it's a Dalmann—he's amazing. Have you seen his paintings in our museum?" And she steered the conversation to the museum and the city and life in the city and to where they both came from and what they wanted from life. He made attempts to ask his questions—how you determine who painted a painting, how you follow its fate, find its true owner. She responded to his questions but saw to it that they soon slipped from her conversation again. As the sun vanished behind buildings, it turned cool, and they took a walk around the lake.

"Do you have a boyfriend?" He couldn't imagine that she didn't. She was vivacious, clever, witty, and was not only pretty but also had a charming way of brushing her hair from her face and wrinkling her nose.

"We separated three months ago. And you?"

He counted. "Four."

They had dinner at a restaurant. He realized he wanted to fall in love, wanted



to share with her, to trust her. But he had to watch every word and be evasive when talk turned to his parents, to the girlfriend who had left him, to women who attracted him, to the way he lived. He could not become as intimate as he would have liked. It occurred to him that, if they were to meet in his town and decided to go to his place, he could not ask her up to his room. The picture was hanging there.

She walked him to the train station. She wrote down her name, address, and telephone number for him while they were waiting on the platform. He hesitated, but then jotted down his real name and address for her.

"You don't really want to become a detective, do you?" She had that look of amiable mockery in her eyes again.

"Why?"

"Just asking." She put her arms around his neck and gave him a quick kiss on the lips. "As for your questions—you take the painting to Sotheby's or Christie's. Or, if you've read a book about the painter, like my little detective here, you check who the author is and write him in care of his publisher. That is, if you don't have something to hide, something no one must know about."

"The train's about to pull out." The loudspeaker had announced that the train was departing and the doors were closing. He was already standing on the train.

"Hiding things is exhausting."

He could only nod. The doors had closed.

"A difficult fate awaits you," he said to the girl with the lizard. "The lizard just keeps growing, and you keep getting smaller, and in the end you have to flirt with it. You, a girl—with a lizard." He went on, "Or did you kiss it so that it would turn into a prince, but, instead, it's just grown bigger, and you've got smaller?" He looked at the girl, and suddenly what René Dalmann had done seemed to him a rotten thing to do, a sacrilege. "Are you his sister? Did he hate you? Or love and hate you?"

He went downstairs to the toilet with its tiny sink, above which he had set a tiny shelf where he kept his toothbrush, shaving gear, comb, and brush. He twisted the blade out of the razor and returned to his room. "You're not going to like this. But I have to do it." Following the edge of the frame, he cut the paper pasted across the back of the painting. He discovered that the heavy gold frame was screwed to another frame, on which the canvas was stretched. The screws were small, and to remove them he used the screwdriver he had for loose electrical connections. He was afraid the outer frame would stick to the canvas. But he was able to remove it easily.

He leaned the picture against the wall beside his bed and sat on the floor in front of it. He was no longer surprised to find "Dalmann" in the lower-right corner, written in a childish, lightly slanted hand, the "D" ending in a broad flourish. He would have been amazed not to find it, or some other name, there. What surprised him was the impression the painting now made with the additional inches previously hidden by the frame. The extra sky above the girl's head, her elbow, the tip of which was no longer covered up, the lizard now visible in its entirety—suddenly the painting opened up chest and head, the way a fresh wind and the scent of water let you breathe freely at the shore.

"Did my father lock you up? Or was it whoever the painting belonged to before, maybe still belongs to? And who is or was that?" He examined the frame and found the label of an art dealer in Strasbourg.

On the train trip to his home town, he finished the biography of René Dalmann. In 1930, the painter followed Lydia Diakonov from Paris to Berlin. She was a cabaret artist, the daughter of a Jewish doctor who had converted to Orthodoxy, a creature of supple, enigmatic beauty. She was Dalmann's lizard, his Lydie and his "lizzie." He wrote her letters of undiminishing tenderness. Given his name and the fact that he spoke German without an accent, he was immediately recognized and accepted as a German artist; Ludwig Justi dedicated one of the small rooms in the Crown Prince's Palace to him. In 1933, when his series "In the Streets: Dirty Dance Macabre" was shown at an exhibition in Karlsruhe entitled "Government Art, 1918-1933," René Dalmann publicly made fun of the whole affair. German government art? He had painted the series in Paris, in 1928. But then Eberhard Hanfstaengel closed the Dalmann Room in Berlin, and Lydia's cabaret was smashed to smithereens one night by the S.A. In 1937, even before the opening of the Munich exhibition of "Degenerate Art," René and Lydia Dalmann, who had married by then, left Germany for Strasbourg. Despite his French citizenship, he continued to be regarded as a German artist. In 1938, his work was shown in London at an exhibition of "Twentieth-Century German Art." There were exhibitions in Amsterdam and Paris of paintings of his that had been seized and then released for sale by the German authorities; these were then bought by sympathetic dealers and collectors.

With the entry of the Germans into Strasbourg, every trace of René and Lydia Dalmann vanished. Had they stayed, fled to unoccupied France or to the United States by way of Portugal? The biographer faithfully listed the pros and cons of each possibility but avoided a definitive answer. Whatever they had done, it must have been under new names. In 1946, there was an exhibition in New York, by a Ron Valomme, of paintings whose style anticipated the New Savages but whose content was indebted to the thematic issues of Dadaist Surrealism. Was Ron Valomme, as some critics suggested, the same person as René Dalmann? There was no reliable trace of Ron Valomme, either.

He had no key to his mother's studio apartment. He sat down on the entrance step, stared at the cobblestone path that led from the apartments to the garage, at the evergreen shrubs planted on the slope, and at the roses his mother had planted beside the front door in an effort to counter the sterile atmosphere of the place. He thought about his father. He realized that he knew nothing about him, nothing about his father's parents, who had died in an air raid during the war, about his education, about his activities before and during the war or his career afterward.

"What did Father do during the war?" He was sitting on the terrace with his mother. She had returned from work and made tea. Her gaze moved over the roofs and out across the countryside.

She sighed. "Here we go."

"Here we go—nothing. What would be the point of my accusing or condemning my dead father? I want to know how my father came by a painting by René Dalmann, which, though I'm not exactly sure of its value, is surely worth hundreds of thousands. I want to know why he made such a secret of the painting."

"Because he was afraid someone would dispute his ownership. He was on the military court in Strasbourg, but when he found out that the people he was quartered with were Jews with forged papers, he helped them. The painting was their way of thanking him."

"So what was father's problem?"

"The painter and his wife had vanished by war's end, and there were rumors. Your father was worried that if he was identified in any way with the painting it would put him in a bad light. He couldn't prove that it was a gift."

He looked at his mother. She was sitting beside him, gazing in the other direction.

"Mother?"

"Yes?" She didn't turn her face toward him.

"Were you with him there, in Strasbourg? Did you see it all happen, or did father tell you about it afterward?"

"How was I supposed to be with him or him with me in Strasbourg in the middle of the war?"

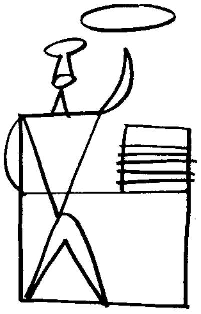
"Did you believe what father told you?"

She still didn't turn toward him. He gazed at her profile, which betrayed no irritation, no anger, no sadness. "When he was released from prison by the French, in 1948, and we saw each other again, I had other things to do than worry about his stories from the war. You can't imagine all the stories people brought back from the war."

"If you believed him—why did you always use to talk about 'that Jewish girl'?"

"You remember that?"

He didn't answer her question. "Why?"



"I thought the girl was the painter's daughter, and they were Jews."

"That doesn't explain your scorn." He shook his head. "No, you didn't believe father. You didn't buy his story about helping Jews. Or you thought it wasn't the whole story and that there was something between him and the girl. Was he blackmailing her? Did he force her to have an affair with him? You knew that she was the painter's wife, is that it?"

She said nothing.

"Why did father lose his job as a judge?" He turned to look at her. She had thrust out her chin and pursed her lips, and he could see she was refusing to answer his question.

"Would it be any better if I asked his colleagues or supervisors from those days? I'm sure I'll find someone who'll understand why, as a future lawyer, I want to know what happened."

"He served on a military court. He had to be strict. He had to be hard. Do you think you win friends that way?"

"No, but it didn't disqualify him for a judgeship after the war."

"He was accused of something that wasn't true but sounded so awful that he didn't want to subject himself—or you or me—to it."

He looked at her.

"They said he condemned an officer to death for having helped Jews escape the police. Since you think you have to know everything—the officer was his friend, and they said he turned him in himself."

"Whoever made the accusation must have found witnesses or documents or reports. Did it become a big story in the press?"

"Not locally, but in the rest of the country. Around here, people made sure the whole thing vanished from the headlines quickly."

He could check newspaper files and track down the journalist who had made the accusation and have a look at his evidence. Maybe he could also find out where his father had lived in Strasbourg and who else had been living in the house at the time. Were there lists of Jews from Strasbourg who had been transported to the death camps? Were there relatives of René Dalmann who might be worth talking to?

"What did Father say to the charges?"

But no sooner had he asked than he didn't want to hear any more.

"That he and the officer plus another officer had helped a lot of Jews and that the one he condemned had had to be sacrificed so that they wouldn't all end up dead, especially the Jews who were in danger. And that it was all by dumb chance that he ended up presiding over the case and having to pronounce sentence."

He laughed. "So Father did everything right? And everyone else just misunderstood?"

His mother offered him the couch for the night; because of her bad back, she often slept on the floor. But he declined; he couldn't bear the idea of sleeping on the sofa where his mother usually slept, with its smell of her, and the hollows her body had made.

When he woke up in the middle of the night, he nonetheless could sense her presence as strongly as if he were lying on the sofa. He could smell her and hear her breathing. In the moonlight, he saw her clothes neatly arranged on the arms, seat, and back of the chair. At times, she would shift to the edge of the sofa in her sleep, and then light would fall on her face, and he could see her white hair and hard features. He knew that she had been a beautiful woman; he had once seen a photograph his father had taken of her on their honeymoon, coming toward him between hedges in a park, wearing a pale dress, walking quietly, a soft, surprised, happy look on her face. But he couldn't recall ever having seen her so happy or so soft, either with him or with his father. Was the war to blame? Or events in Strasbourg? Had his father done things to her or to others that she could never forgive him for? And why had she been so hard on him, too? Because he was his father's son?

Sadness overwhelmed him. He felt sorry for his mother, his father, and himself, especially himself. The presence of his mother, of her clothes, her breath, her smell—it all still felt unpleasant to him, and at the same time it hurt him that he found it unpleasant. Why did he have no childhood memories of his mother's attention and tenderness? If only he had them, then he could recognize and love the woman from back then in the body present now.

The next morning, she gave him a file. His father had put it together. He had collected the newspaper articles about his case, glued them on white paper, noting the source at the top of the page and filling the right margin with exclamation points and question marks to express approval or disagreement. For the most part, he rejected what was reported, sometimes he even made corrections, like editorial marks on a manuscript. He had crossed out an error concerning his age, noting the change in the margin and providing his true age. He had corrected a false statement about the dates of his service on the military court in Strasbourg, errors as to the ranks of officers involved, an inaccurate account of the submission and rejection of an appeal for clemency, and a wrong date given for the execution of the officer he had sentenced to death. There was an especially large number of corrections in a long article from a major paper. This was followed by several pages entitled "Rebuttal," which his father had typed on a machine his son knew well. "It is incorrect that my service as a judge of the military court in Strasbourg began on 1 July, 1943. Rather, it is correct to say . . ." And it went on like that for page after page. "It is incorrect that I wormed my way into the confidence of the accused and abused it in regard to his attempt to prevent Jews from being arrested. Rather, it is correct to say that I provided whatever help I could to the accused in his endeavors, warned him of impending peril, and continued to attempt to protect both him and said Jews despite the threat of my violating important duties at considerable peril to myself. It is incorrect that I pronounced a sentence of death from selfish motives and with the intent of bending the law to the detriment of the accused. Rather, it is correct to say that, in view of the evidence and the law, I had no choice but to condemn the accused to death. It is incorrect that I illegally enriched myself with the property of Jews and in particular ordered that portable items with which said Jews fled or planned to flee be consigned to me for the purpose of illegally misappropriating them. Rather, it is correct to say that I had neither authority to dispose of Jewish property nor the duty to protect Jewish property interests and therefore could neither abuse my authority nor fail to

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fulfill said duty. It is incorrect that I . . ."

His mother watched him read. He asked her, "This rebuttal—do you know it?"

"Yes."

"Did the paper publish it? Did Father send it to them?"

"No. His lawyer didn't want him to."

"Did you?"

"Surely you don't believe your father consulted me."

"But what did you think of what he'd written? How would you have felt if it had been published?"

"What did I think?" She shrugged. "He weighed every sentence. They couldn't have used a single word of it to lay a trap for him."

"He copied paragraphs directly from the penal code. He copied them to demonstrate that he couldn't be punished. But it makes for appalling reading. It reads as if he would be willing to acknowledge everything but insists he did nothing punishable by law. As if you admit you poisoned someone's food but insist that you followed every line of the recipe in a cookbook—that's the way it reads."

She took the file, ordered the pages from left to right, snapped them in place, and closed the cover. "He'd grown very cautious. During the war, things had been topsy-turvy—enough to last him a lifetime. After the war, he was cautious, for your and my sake as well as for his own. He was even cautious when he drank. You know how drunks are, there's something they're not supposed to say, they try to avoid it, then blast it out anyway. Your father never did that."

It sounded as if she was proud. Proud that her husband had at least never bragged about what he had done to her and others.

"Did he ever ask your forgiveness for what he'd done to you?"

"Ask my forgiveness?" She stared, dumbfounded.

He gave up. He realized she wasn't holding anything back from him but simply didn't know what he wanted to know, didn't understand what he was insisting upon or why. She wanted him to leave her and her husband in peace, just as she left him in peace. The spot in her soul that had been wounded had scarred over, and, with it, its soft tissue, the stuff of happiness and love. Her soul was all scar tissue now. Maybe back then, when she had been wounded, or soon after, the pain might have been healed. It was too late now. It had been too late for a long time. She had lived for a long time now with her scars, lies, caution.

Then, suddenly, the thought came to him. This wasn't the first time she was leaving him in peace. As far back as he could remember, she had left him in peace, wanted him to leave her in peace. As if she had nothing to do with him. As if he had once troubled her too strongly, too deeply. "When you conceived me, did Father rape you? Was it while he was in Strasbourg, doing awful things, and having an affair with the Jewish girl? Did he arrive one night, and you knew about this other woman and didn't want to sleep with him, and he didn't give a damn what you knew or wanted, and raped you? Is that how I came into the world? You've never forgiven me for that, have you?"

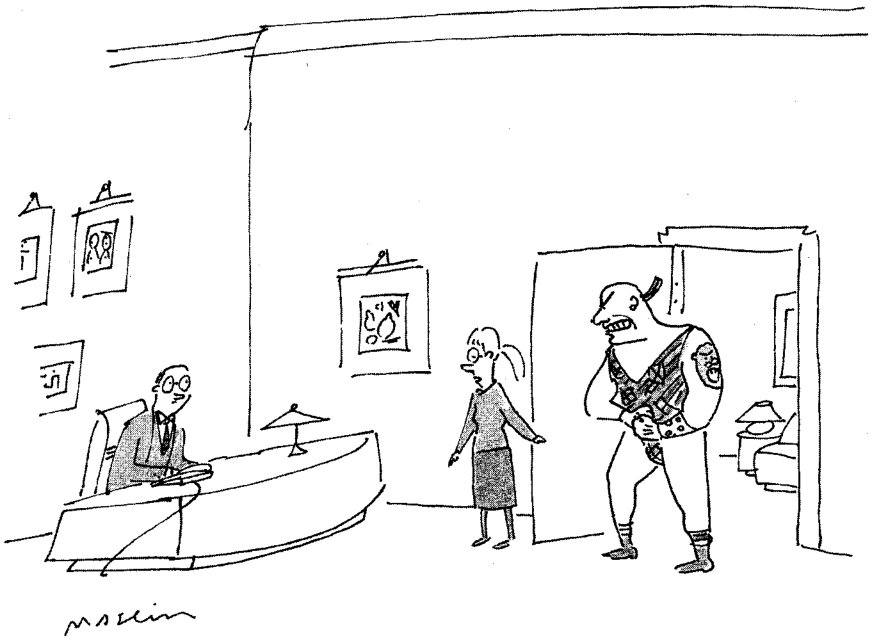
She kept shaking her head, over and over. Then he saw that she was crying. At first she sat there rigid and mute, tears rolling down her cheeks, dangling for a moment from her chin, and then dripping onto her skirt. When she raised her hands to wipe the tears from her face, she began to sob.

He stood up, went over to her chair, and tried to hug her. She sat there rigid and stiff and refused his hug. He talked to her, but she refused his words. She was still silent when he said goodbye.

He took a train home and resumed his life. When the librarian wrote him that she would be in town on business, he met her, they took a walk, had dinner, and returned to his place. He had shoved the painting under his bed.

But it wouldn't leave him in peace. What if she happened to look under the bed and discovered the painting? What if the bed frame and mattress collapsed? The painting would be ruined, and, worse, would be visible when things were put back in order. What if he were to talk in his sleep to the girl with the lizard? He did it often during the day. "Girl with lizard," he would say, "I have to study," and he would tell her what he had to study. Or he would ask her opinion about what to wear. Or scold her in the morning because she hadn't awakened him in time. Or talk with her about the fate of René Dalmann or about his father. "Did your painter give you to my father? Or did my father betray your painter to get you—when your painter was trying to escape with you? But why with you in particular?" Again and again he would ask her, "What am I going to do with you, girl with lizard?"

Should he look for Dalmann's heirs and give them the painting? But he didn't think much of the notion of inheritance. Should he cash the painting in and make his life easier with the money? Or do good with it? Did he owe anything to the people his father had treated



"A Mr. Killer Kong Man to smack you down."

unjustly? Because he had profited from his father's misdeeds? But how had he profited? The fact that he could look at the girl with the lizard and talk to her—was it a blessing or a curse?

"What's happened to your painting?" the librarian asked.

They were lying in bed, gazing at one another. "I didn't get any further." He made a face intended to show that it was all a bit painful but didn't matter. "I'm not working for the lawyer anymore."

"So, somewhere in Manhattan, there's a little apartment whose tenant has died, but a painting by one of the century's most renowned artists hangs there unrecognized? The tenant was poor and old, and now cockroaches are running across his dirty table, rats are gnawing at his shoes. The gangster who broke into his apartment and has settled in is lying on his bed, snoring, and *bang! bang!* one day, in a shootout, the girl gets a hole in her forehead, and the lizard loses its tail. Perhaps the old man was René Dalmann himself?" She was talking a little too much. But he liked listening to her. "You can live with that?"

"With what?"

"That it's all been left in the dark?"

"Anybody who wants to know can go to Sotheby's or Christie's or to the guys who've written books about René Dalmann."

She cuddled up to him. "You've learned something. Have you learned something?"

He didn't want to fall asleep. He didn't want to talk in his sleep. He didn't want her to wake up and decide to go to the toilet, search under the bed for her shoes, and find the painting. He didn't want . . . But then he fell asleep after all, and it was light when he woke up, she had just come back from the toilet and hopped into bed so hard that it frightened him. But the frame and mattress held.

"I've got to catch the seven-forty-four train so I can be at the institute by nine."

"I'll take you."

Before closing and locking the door, he looked back, and his room bothered him. It wasn't his room. She had rummaged in his books, she was having her period and had left stains in his bed; during their walk along the shore she had picked up a rusty old letter scale and carried it home. And the girl with the lizard wasn't hanging above his bed. After saying goodbye to the librarian at the station and still feeling a bit distracted and uneasy, he returned home and straightened up. Books back onto their shelves, new sheets on the bed, the painting back above it, the letter scale on top of the wardrobe, just behind his suitcase. "Yes, girl with lizard, now everything's back in order."

He was standing in the middle of the room and looking at this order. The order of books in the bookcase, which reminded him of the ordered books in his father's bookcase. The same shabby tidiness that his mother had summoned up to counter the family's decline. "Girl with Lizard," no longer in its golden frame but a canvas stretched on wood, yet as dominating as it ever was in his parents' apartment. And, just as had been the case at home, the painting was a treasure, a mystery, a window onto beauty and freedom, and at the same time a commanding, controlling power to which sacrifices would have to be made. He thought of the life still ahead of him.

He did nothing that day. He strolled the streets a bit, passing the law school, the bar where he worked, and the house where the girl he had once loved still lived. Or had he never learned to love?

That evening, he went back to his apartment for a moment to wrap the painting, its frame, and some newspaper in the sheet he had stripped from the bed. Then he took them to the beach. There were fires burning, with young people sitting around them, partying. He walked on until the last fire was behind him. Then he made one of his own. The newspapers flared up, as did the sheet and the frame. He tossed the painting on the fire. Colors fused, and the girl melted and was no longer recognizable. But, before she had burned entirely, the edge of the canvas curled back to reveal another painting stretched on the frame beneath "Girl with Lizard." The giant lizard, the tiny girl—for a fraction of a second he saw the painting that René Dalmann had wanted to protect and take with him as he fled. Then the canvas blazed up.

When the fire died away, he shoved the embers around with the toe of his shoe. He didn't wait until it had all burned down to ashes. He watched the little blue and red flames for a while. Then he went home. ♦

(*Translated, from the German, by John E. Woods.*)

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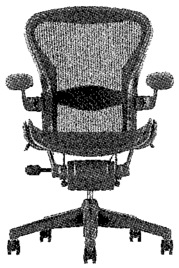

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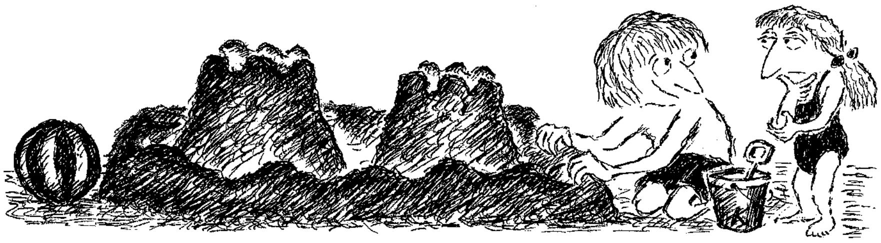


STEVE BRODNER

A CRITIC AT LARGE

DARKNESS REVISITED

Coppola's new version of "Apocalypse Now."

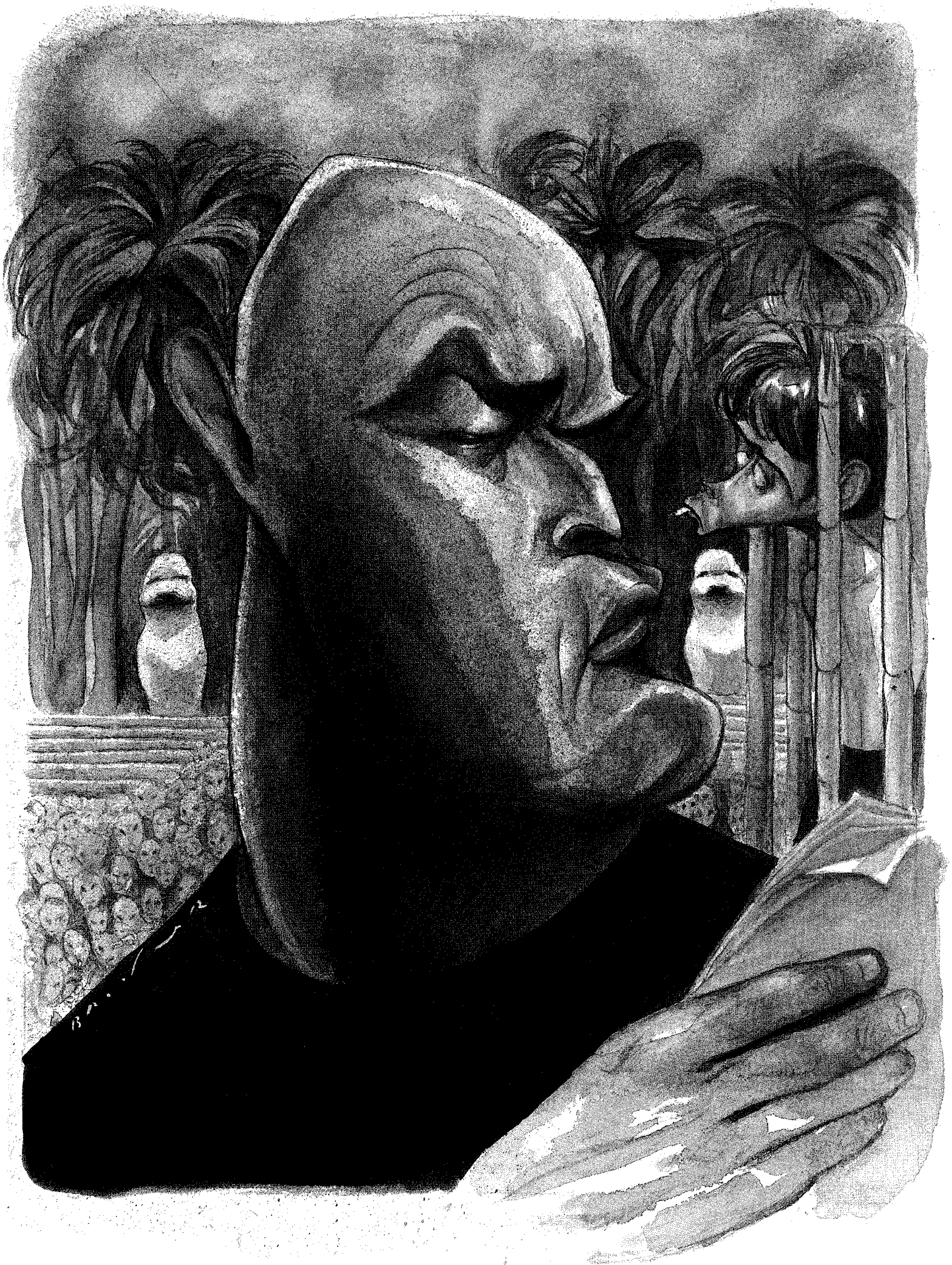
BY ANTHONY LANE

So, the most hotly awaited movie of mid-2001 was made in the nineteen-seventies. Its only rival this summer is "Planet of the Apes," the remake of a hairy hit from 1968. Is there nothing new under the sun? Where did all the ideas go? Whatever happened to the heroes? In the case of "Apocalypse Now," you could argue that this one picture was so centripetal, that it sucked such a strange array of obsessions into its maw, that American movies took years to get over the shock. Think of a film like "Full Metal Jacket" and you start to wonder whether its mood—etiolated, vicious, vinegar-thin—flowed not from the coolness of Stanley Kubrick but from the plain, annoying fact that, eight years before, Francis Ford Coppola had called all the shots. Convention states that the primary lessons of Coppola's film were logistical: Do Not Waste Money. Finish Your Script Before You Start. Do Not Hire the Fat Man. And Don't Get Caught in the Storm. But the truth may be that other directors gazed at "Apocalypse Now" and quietly asked themselves, "Do I dare?" And, for the most part, they didn't. Instead, they took notes on "Star Wars," with its nicely decorated vacuums, and proceeded from there.

Anyway, the horror is back, and this time it's even longer. A tantalizing recut entitled "Apocalypse Now Redux," which Coppola showed to high acclaim at the Cannes Film Festival, in May, will shortly be screening across America. For the benefit of those lucky souls who are too young to know the movie, and who will thus be entering dark territory in a virginal state, it may be helpful to recap the twin, tangled stories of the original "Apocalypse Now." The story inside the film, gingerly lifted from Conrad's "Heart of Darkness," concerns a young intelligence officer, Captain Willard (Martin Sheen), who is ordered to take a boat upriver, into Cambodia, and terminate the command—and, while he's about it, the life—of Colonel Kurtz (Marlon Brando), who has exceeded his military brief by becoming, to all intents and purposes, a god. Wrapped around this mission is another story: the making of "Apocalypse Now." As befits the tale of a man mythologized, the movie itself took root and bloomed into a legend; the shoot in the Philippines overran by eleven months, the production was plagued by everything from typhoons to a heart attack, and Coppola was scribbling down some of the dialogue as he went along. The cut you will see now runs to a hundred and ninety-six minutes, but, if that sounds excessive, count yourself lucky; the total footage filmed ran to three hundred and seventy hours.

I think it may be time to split these strands apart. The film has become mired in the history of its inception, like a child who has to stand there, stiff with shame, as his mother recites the saga of his back-breaking birth. The separation could be painful, because there is still much to enjoy in the farrago of the Philippines; out of it sprang Peter Cowie's "The 'Apocalypse Now' Book" as well as a documentary, "Hearts of Darkness," which was itself based on "Notes: On the Making of 'Apocalypse Now,' " the spry and instructive journal that was kept and published by Eleanor Coppola, the director's wife. But what matters is the result; just as the players in a production of "Macbeth," or an editor of the text, must at some point set aside variant readings and go with the version they prefer, so we should try to agree on what feels, for better or worse, like a finished product; and that is what "Apocalypse Now Redux" proclaims itself to be. To a kid of eighteen, standing on the sidewalk in midtown, poised to choose between "Jurassic Park III" and "Apocalypse Now Redux," the question should be not "Did you know that Coppola sacked Harvey Keitel from the lead role after only three weeks?" or "Is it really true that Brando had to be lowered into position by crane?" but "Is this movie any good?"

The answer is yes, and, as far as the kid is concerned, it will be yes for a very specific reason: great helicopters. Better still, *real* helicopters. I cannot begin to describe the nostalgic pleasure of genuine hardware; when Colonel Kilgore (Robert Duvall) and his boys come clattering in over the beach and blitz the village, we know that they are riding actual choppers, not only because of the racket and the downdraft from the rotors but because, even if the digital skills had been on tap at the time, Kilgore was never a man to be fobbed off with the virtual. Is there a better cameo than Duvall's—a few short scenes, the last of them invisible, nothing but a barking bullhorn in the distance—in the history of cinema? Could even Orson Welles, casting his own limelight in "The Third Man," vie with the spectacle of a shirtless Duvall in shades and cowboy hat, no more disturbed by a nearby explosion than he would be by the starting of a car? The trouble is, of course, that Duvall is almost too good; he forces the movie to peak and burn halfway through, but, more than that, he frightens the living doves out of us. "Apocalypse Now" was written by Coppola in conjunction with John Milius, and there are times—not just the maniacal minutes of Kilgore—when you can sense the director losing grip of his own political uncertainties



The restored footage includes Brando's only daylight scene in the movie. The visible Kurtz has a proud Roman madness.

and starting to quail before the sure, hawkish touch of the Milius talon. One reason for Kilgore to play Wagner from speakers on his gunships is to prime his troops for attack ("My boys love it"). Another, perhaps, is to remind the audience that we must reach back as far as Wagner himself to find so brazen an instance of that most radical of aesthetic effects: the conservative high.

The seasoned moviegoer might respond that such highs are everywhere, not least in the musicals of M-G-M. But those are light on their feet, whereas Coppola slows his pace and burrows into intensity. Just what the atmosphere of his movie is composed of—to what extent, if any, it was oxygenated by comedy, or by the merest breath of love—has become easier to gauge with the release of "Apocalypse Now Redux." In this revised form, edited by Walter Murch, the movie contains forty-nine minutes of additional footage. Much of this has been known about and discussed by Coppola fans, who croon over every scrap of hearsay like relic hunters musing on the knucklebone of a saint, but, until now, little of it has been open to public viewing. Now we have it, and the rumormongers are out of business. There are several new sequences to take in: a dinner party for Captain Willard and his crew at a French plantation house upriver; the reappearance of the Playboy Bunnies, whom we last saw being airlifted into, and then out of, the fevered embrace of U.S. troops; more of Kurtz, as he scornfully recites a passage from *Time* magazine to the imprisoned Willard; and, least obviously, but most affectingly, more time on the boat.

This is the coughing vessel—a descendant of the African Queen herself, maybe—in which Willard chugs toward his fate. I came away from the new cut with a much firmer grasp of the ship's company: Chef (Frederic Forrest), Lance (Sam Bottoms), Clean (Laurence Fishburne), and Chief (Albert Hall). The added material is nothing special, a few moments at the beginning of their voyage, but their companionship, and the resigned dignity of Hall in particular, feels like the last gesture of decency—even of pleasure, caught on the wing—before they get fouled up in barbarism. For a while, these folk remind you of the crew in "Jaws"—which had come out the summer before "Apocalypse Now" started shooting, and in which John Milius had a hand—and they make a more hopeful spectacle than anything in "Heart of Darkness." The novella seems sour and sickly from the word go; Conrad was rummaging around in what he calls, with unforgettable nastiness, "the dead cats of civilization," and Coppola takes a little while to join him in feline hell. We still get Willard, wire-limbed and bendy with alcohol, punching the mirror in his Saigon hotel room, as if to destroy himself before the action gets under way; yet, throughout the revivified film, we feel Coppola and Murch exerting a slight, subtle pressure of the beautiful against the damned.

Hence the long sequence in the plantation house, where our heroes dine on French food and wine in the presence of French leftovers—a colonial family, who can no more flee Vietnam than a ghost can quit its nightly stage. (The diners could be cousins of Buñuel's stylish, paranoid snobs in "The Exterminating Angel.") Willard ends the evening by sleeping with a young French widow (Aurore Clément), who offers him opium; indeed, the entire setup has the air of a pipe dream, as if the Americans were taking a magical history tour through the region. It goes on too long, and I have to agree with Murch's original account of the passage as an "ultimately indigestible lump of political information," yet somehow it belongs here, pushing the movie ever further from the terrain of the war film and closer to the tragic; we see more of what was lost, of what is yet to slide into these waters. And, if Coppola kept the plantation, he had to keep the Bunnies—a devastating new scene, as the boat draws up beside a medevac encampment, where the girls are lodged in refuge from the rain. Willard makes a trade. "Captain, are you giving away our fuel for the Playmate of the Month?" Chief asks. "No, Playmate of the Year." And that is how Lance and Chef get to make out with the Bunnies, inside a sodden, grounded helicopter at the ass-end of the world. Coppola finds a balance of tenderness and despair—the girls seem too drugged by the place, with its First World War desolation, to care about being manhandled—that he has never repeated elsewhere. Back home, to squire a centerfold was once the prerogative of swordsmen and billionaires: the wet dream of Middle America. Over in Vietnam, it's just wet, and even an Army cook with a drooping mustache can have his way. Welcome to Id Central.

And so to Brando's Kurtz, the superego, who has arrived at a place where even the unfettered lusts of others are his to command. We get a new slice of Brando here, and I like it not for what he says but for the light on him as he speaks; for the first and only time, it is daylight, and we get to observe that massive boulder of head, as steady with threat as any of the carved sculptures that encrust his temple. (The sister movie to this one, in its ritual dance around the totems of life and death, is "Last Tango in Paris"; that Brando was filmed, in both cases, by the Italian cinematographer Vittorio Storaro is no coincidence.) Kurtz in the shadows was pure mystery, but the visible Kurtz has a proud Roman madness, like something from the final volume of Gibbon, that harks back sadly to Brando's Mark Antony in "Julius Caesar," and urges you to consider Coppola's movie less as a quest into the unknown and more as a meditation on the American imperium, and on its need to make itself—and its purposes, fair or fell—known beyond its shores. One wonders whether Coppola can taste the irony: he spent a year or so in a troublesome foreign land, and he wound up with a movie about home—about Willard, Chief, and the rest of the guys, and what they could turn into if cast adrift. That is why your heart breaks at the end, when Willard, having carved up the Colonel, finds the dazed and war-painted Lance, his sole fellow-survivor, takes him by the hand, and leads him away like a child.

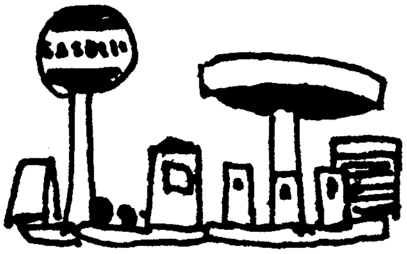
The last minutes of "Apocalypse Now Redux" seem impossibly ripe and tense, graced not so much with Conradian gloom as with an odd, Jamesian sense of great matters being forced to hang fire. It is simply out of the question, these days, that a major studio would allow a director, of any stature, to close a big-budget picture by effectively leaving it open, with all manner of monstrosity still writhing around inside; indeed, I felt a small, vulgar desire—bred mostly, though not entirely, by sitting through the schlock of the eighties and nineties—to see the United States Cavalry sweep in, under a proud sun, and blow the heart right out of the darkness. As it happens, Coppola did film the destruction of Kurtz's stronghold, and you can see it in the DVD version released in 1999; for movie theatres, however, he has always preferred whimper to bang.

There is still plenty amiss with this picture; like Murch, I find stuff that is indigestible—sticky lumps of intellectual residue, like the general's big speech to Willard before the mission ("There's a conflict in every human heart between the rational and the irrational"), not to mention the perennial, uneasy suspicion that Kurtz's kingdom, run by Brando with Dennis Hopper as his Fool, is in fact nothing worse than a T. S. Eliot Study Group gone terribly wrong. But there is so much to set against that, beginning with the deep, *thugga-thugga* heartbeat of the choppers in the opening seconds; they fade in overhead, as if the audience were a restless river. (Murch got an Oscar for Best Sound on the picture, and his work remains unsurpassed; take a friend who is visually impaired to this movie, and I guarantee that he or she will get things out of it that you can barely imagine.) Twenty-two years on, the picture has aged better than we have; it both feeds our hunger for sensation and scorns our impatient need to have it all right now—apocalypse is, whatever the title claims, always waiting round the river bend. Many people will continue to find it incoherent; but, frankly, given the choice between a work so laden with ambition that it nearly breaks its back and the stiff, crowing blockbusters of today, too timid to stretch their wings, I know which I would take. If you have never watched "Apocalypse Now" in any form; if you know it well and wish to bend your Jesuitical attention to the latest addenda; if you have grown to love it on scumbled videotape but failed to catch it on the big screen; if you were out of your head during a pre-dawn college showing, duly noted the movie as a trip, and find yourself unable to remember whether the trip in question was Coppola's, America's, or yours; in short, however reverent or rocky your relations with this film—see it now. ♦

BRIEFLY NOTED

Word Freak, *by Stefan Fatsis (Houghton Mifflin; $25).* Fatsis's dual project—to write about competition Scrabble players and to achieve an expert rating in the game—draws him into a subculture of people who anagram as naturally as they read and spend years learning entire dictionaries and devising thousands of letter combinations. Not surprisingly, they turn out to be an eccentric bunch, many of whom acknowledge that the game is a form of escape. "This basically validates my existence," says a former world champion, who still lives with his father and hasn't held a regular job since 1990. The more we learn about Scrabble—its history, its international variants and myriad schisms and controversies—the less outlandish such extremism appears. Ultimately, it is the dizzyingly intricate possibilities of the game itself which fascinate.

Unknown Shore, *by Robert Ruby (Holt; $26).* In 1576, the English pirate Martin Frobisher set sail in search of the hoped-for Northwest Passage, whose discovery would allow England to outflank Spain and other competitors for the lucrative China trade. He travelled as far as Baffin Island, in the Canadian Arctic, and brought back to London a few souvenirs, including an Inuit man he had kidnapped and a black rock. The unfortunate Inuit died, but an alchemist pronounced that the black rock contained gold, and Frobisher returned to the New World twice to quarry more rock. Death and disappointment were the result—the rock was worthless hornblende, the glitter merely mica—and the details of Frobisher's expeditions were largely forgotten. But in the eighteen-sixties, on an unrelated quest, a Cincinnati newspaper publisher named Charles Francis Hall encountered Inuit stories of long-ago visits by white men in ships, and found in them a faithful account of this early encounter between Europeans and natives of North America. Ruby's rendition of this twin set of journeys is engrossing, well paced, and sensitive to the larger issues embedded in the story—an adventure yarn that delivers more than it promises.



The Voice of Memory: Interviews, 1961-1987, *by Primo Levi, edited by Marco Belpoliti and Robert Gordon, translated from the Italian by Robert Gordon (New Press; $24.95).* "I have deliberately assumed the calm, sober language of the witness, neither the lamenting tones of the victim nor the irate voice of someone who seeks revenge," Levi wrote in a self-interview in 1976. Despite Levi's concentration-camp experiences and his enigmatic death—an apparent suicide—in 1987, the chemist-writer speaks often and eloquently about his love of life, from the joys of mountaineering to his faith in empirical observation. These moments make the book's darker overtones all the more painful. The growing fatalism that marked Levi's last years, for instance, is recorded in a 1982 interview conducted on a train to Auschwitz. An Italian journalist asks if the idea of another Auschwitz is not dead. "The idea is most certainly not dead," Levi replies, "because nothing ever dies. Everything returns renewed, nothing ever dies."

Dangerous Muse, *by Nancy Schoenberger (Nan A. Talese/Doubleday; $27.50).* Lady Caroline Blackwood, born in 1931, was an heir to the Guinness fortune and a legendary beauty. Married three times (to the painter Lucian Freud, the composer Israel Citkowitz, and the poet Robert Lowell), she was also, in her own right, a ferociously talented writer of mordant essays, short stories, and novels. Although this disorganized, badly edited biography is full of information about Lady Caroline's bloodlines and the derring-do of the glitterati, the subject herself is all but obscured by the attention lavished on her well-known spouses—an outcome that Blackwood would probably have both loathed and, with her taste for black comedy, found bleakly funny.

GOOD AND EVIL

Life in medieval Languedoc was fun-loving. It was also heresy.

BY JOAN ACOCELLA

For as long as people have said that there is one God, other people have said that there are two (or more), because, if there is only one, how do you explain evil? Why would one God, the good God, make his people suffer so? The grandfather of dualist doctrines in Europe is Manichaeanism, which flourished in the early Christian era. It died out, but dualism didn't, and in the twelfth century a new variation, Catharism, arrived in the West, probably by way of the Balkans, and settled in Languedoc, in southern France. The Catharists maintained that the cosmos was divided between a good God and an evil one. The evil one had created the material world. Therefore all matter was sinfulness, and anyone who hoped for salvation would deal with it abstemiously—eat no meat, touch no money, have no sex. Lying and violence were also forbidden. The Cathars condemned the Catholic Church in the strongest possible terms—"the mother of fornication," one Cathar elder called it—not just for its laxities, its brocaded bishops and lecherous friars, but more for its orthodoxies, for legitimatizing humankind's meat-eating and childbearing and merrymaking. Chaste and austere, the Cathar priests carried their message from town to town and won many converts. It is estimated that a quarter to a third of the people in Languedoc were sympathetic to Catharism, if not enrolled in the faith.

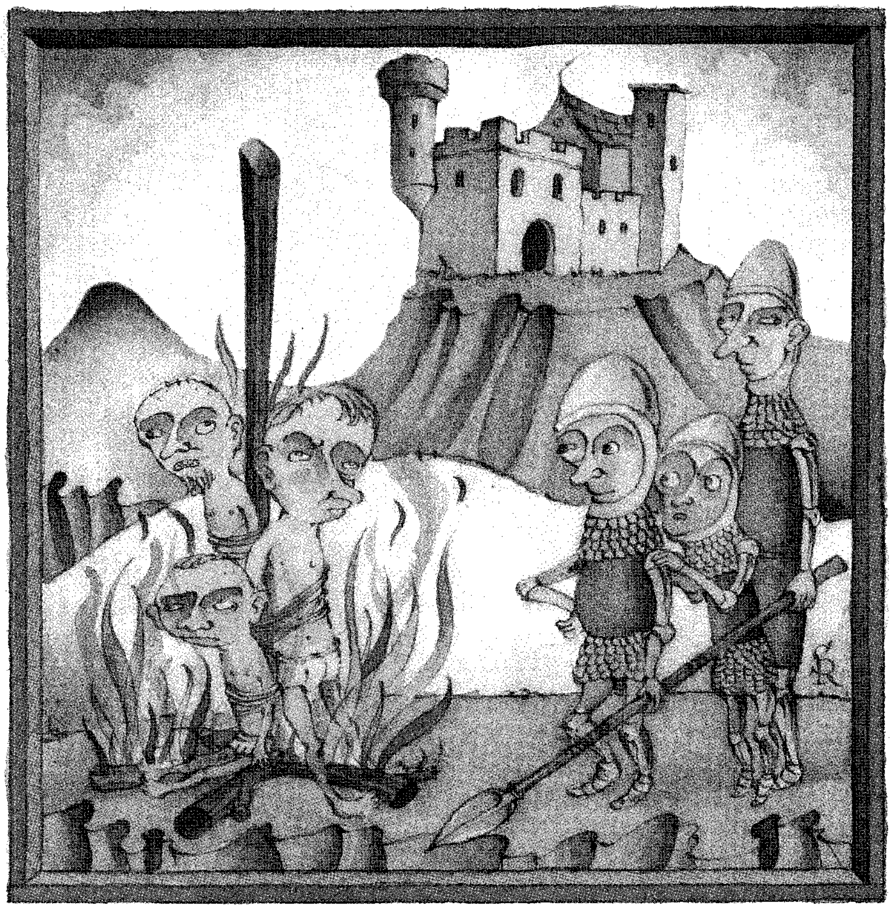
So this was an important heresy, perhaps the most important, apart from Protestantism, that the Church ever faced, and Europeans take it seriously. What the Boston Tea Party is to us, the story of the Cathars (with a very different ending) is to the French: a golden legend, a symbol of righteous refusal. Particularly in the late nineteenth century, when a number of leading intellectual trends—regionalism, mysticism, anti-authoritarianism, the cult of simplicity—locked in with the old heresy, Catharism was widely written about. Interest revived during the Second World War; the Cathars looked like an early version of the Resistance. Later, they appealed to the counterculture movements born of the sixties. Still today, they are beloved of vegetarians, pacifists, eco-hikers. Partly, I imagine, as a result of similar, countercultural sympathy, partly to contest countercultural mythmaking—and also in response to the revival of religious war—there has recently been a bonanza of books on Catharism, notably Stephen O'Shea's "The Perfect Heresy: The Revolutionary Life and Death of the Medieval Cathars" (Walker; $25) and René Weis's "The Yellow Cross: The Story of the Last Cathars, 1290-1329" (Knopf; $35). Meanwhile, Jonathan Sumption's 1978 "The Albigensian Crusade" (Faber; $15) is out in paperback. There are even travel books. Rion Klawinski's "Chasing the Heretics: A Modern Journey Through the Medieval Languedoc" (Ruminator; $15) will tell you which road to take to get to where Giraude de Lavaur, the daughter of a prominent Cathar, was dropped down a well and had stones thrown on her until she died, and how to find a decent pizza in the vicinity.

The Church dealt with the heresy temperately at first. The Pope, Innocent III, sent priests from his holiest order, the Cistercians, to remonstrate with the formerly faithful. But they had little success. In town after town, the people welcomed the Cistercians, professed their orthodoxy, and then, once the gates were closed on the good brothers, fell back into the arms of the Cathars.

As the Pope knew, this would not have happened if the Cathars had not had the protection of the feudal lords of Languedoc, notably Raymond VI, the count of Toulouse; Raymond Roger, the count of Foix; and Raymond Roger Trencavel, the viscount of Béziers and Carcassonne. These men had no love of the Vatican or of any presumed authority beyond their walls. Though on paper Languedoc was subject to northern rule, in fact it was independent, and not just politically. It had its own language—the *langue d'oc*, or Occitan, closer to Catalan than to French—and its own culture. The Franks were pious, conformist, and warlike; the Occitans, fun-loving and freethinking. Toulouse, the third-largest city in Latin Christendom (after Rome and Venice), was full of foreigners, bearing silks and spices and books. Ideas were discussed; beauty was prized; people washed, or women did. There were "new men," merchants, getting rich. And the Jews from whom they borrowed their money were not just tolerated; in some towns, they were appointed to public office. Women, or, at least, noblewomen, held positions of power and entertained poets by their hearths. It was in the castles of Languedoc that the literature of courtly love was created, celebrating adultery and erotic transport.

What these jaunty folk found to admire in the stern creed of Catharism is an interesting question, but the new faith had a convenient two-tiered behavioral code. If you underwent a rite called the *consolamentum* (consolation), you became a Cathar priest, or "perfect," and you more or less had to be perfect. But the great majority of Cathars were not perfects; they were only *credentes* (believers), and for them things were different. They understood that the world was evil. Nevertheless, they postponed the *consolamentum* until they were dying, and before that they lived agreeably loose lives. As the saying goes, when everything is forbidden, everything is allowed. For example, Cathar doctrine held married sex in *lower* esteem than the extramarital variety, for it cloaked its carnality in a specious legitimacy. The same with meat-eating. It was always bad; to refrain during Lent was hypocrisy. So the Cathar faithful ate a lot of ham and had a lot of sex, and looked forward with sincere hearts to the deathbed rite that would wipe these sins away.

The foremost southern nobles were not Cathars, but many of their kin were, especially the women. The Count of Foix's sisters, his mother, and his aunt were Cathars. His wife, too. With his permission, she went off to become a perfect. But it was not just family feeling that endeared Catharism to the nobles. In most of Languedoc, inheritance was not based on primogeniture, whereby the oldest son got everything and the other sons had to go to the Crusades or become priests. Instead, property was divided among all the children. Accordingly, estates shrank with each generation. There was many a southern viscount whose dominion, in the words of the historian Jonathan Sumption, consisted of "a hundred acres and a quarter of a dilapidated castle." The Church owned a lot of rich land in Languedoc, and it bled the peasants with taxes—an eighth of their cheese, a tenth of their wheat—thus preventing the nobles from doing so. This was bitterly resented. Raymond VI repeatedly seized Church property. Raymond Roger of Foix, a fearless man, actually installed a house for Cathar perfects, directed by his mother, on one of the estates of the local abbey. When the canons of the abbey tried to expel the Cathars, one of them was hacked to death on the altar. In other words, a guerrilla war between the southern lords and the Church was already under way. Any creed that condemned the Church—forget the rest—was O.K. by the southern nobility.



Several thousand were burned. Others were imprisoned or released with penances.

SERGIO RUZZIER

The Church was not slow to respond to such affronts. In 1207, the Pope excommunicated Raymond VI and released his subjects from their obligations to him. When the papal legate arrived at Raymond's court to negotiate with him, hard words were exchanged. Soon afterward, as the legate, journeying homeward, was crossing the Rhône, a horseman materialized on the shore and drove a lance through his back. The Pope's chosen representative lay dead in the mud. That was the end of the Church's willingness to reason with Languedoc.

In fact, the Pope's prior reasonableness was due in part to his lack of success in getting anyone to apply force. For several years, he had been trying to rouse Philip Augustus, the King of France, to invade Languedoc, and he had recently renewed his appeal, adding potent inducements. Anyone who joined what was now called the Albigensian Crusade (the Cathars were thought to be concentrated in the town of Albi) was offered the same spiritual reward as the knights who were fighting the Crusades in Palestine: a plenary indulgence, a guaranteed ticket to Heaven. As for earthly rewards, the lands of the rebel lords were offered to those who could seize them. Before, Philip Augustus had hesitated. Now he became more interested.

In 1209, an army of about twenty thousand came down on the south like dogs. In the first major encounter, the French took the town of Béziers in three hours. It is said that soldiers asked Arnald-Amaury, the head of the Cistercians and the leader of the Crusade, how to distinguish between Cathars and Catholics in meting out punishment—to which he replied, "Kill them all. God will know his own." That story may be apocryphal, but the army did kill them all, about twenty thousand men, women, and children, including the Catholic priests, in the space of a morning. (The remains of a mass grave were discovered under the floor of a church in 1840.) In some towns, the invaders were more merciful; they just killed the heretics. Normally, they burned them en masse—a hundred and forty at Minerve, three hundred at Lavaur. Some of the Cathars, it is said, walked joyfully to the pyre. Others had to be thrown.

Though the southern nobles won some battles, they never really had a chance. Disparities of wealth had made them jealous and fractious—they could not unite against the enemy. Raymond VI, to protect his lands, actually joined the war on the side of the French. By the middle of the century, the south had fallen. Languedoc was scorched rubble, and it belonged to France.

But it still housed heretics. The crusaders had not destroyed Catharism; they had merely driven it underground. Thus began the Inquisition, which was more terrible in certain respects than the Crusade, for the warfare was now psychological. The job was given to the Dominicans, and apart from the fact that they seldom used torture—the Pope didn't like it—they operated in the usual manner. First, they appealed to people's grudges and greed. (Many people suddenly recalled seeing their old enemies in conversation with Cathars.) Then, once the accused were before them, they offered leniency in exchange for information. Even good people named others, and the others named others. It is hard to say how many were burned: probably several thousand. The remainder were imprisoned or released with penances. By these methods the Church, having killed a large percentage of the people of Languedoc, destroyed the rest morally. Neighbors could no longer look each other in the face.

Even then, Catharism did not die, and at the end of the thirteenth century there was actually a revival of the heresy in the southernmost towns, including the village of Montaillou, in the foothills of the Pyrénées. At that time, Montaillou had a population of about two hundred and forty, most of whom were Cathars. Eventually, the Inquisition caught up with them. In 1308, everyone in town over the age of fourteen was arrested. This in itself would have granted Montaillou no immortality. But in the twenty-odd years of interrogations that followed, one of the inquisitors, by chance, was Jacques Fournier, the bishop of Pamiers, and he brought to his task an almost disinterested curiosity and patience. He detained the accused, he drew them out—he was the Studs Terkel of fourteenth-century Languedoc.

Again, this would not have meant much, but, in 1334, Fournier became Pope Benedict XII, with the result that the Fournier Register (the transcript of his interrogations—every word was recorded) ended up in the Vatican. For seven hundred years it moldered in a vault. Then, in the nineteen-fifties, French historians went over to the *annales* movement, whereby history was no longer to be the chronicle of the deeds of great men but of the lives of ordinary people, retrievable from the annals of the past: tax records, parish registers, and—lo and behold—Inquisition transcripts. The Fournier Register was soon published. It fired the brain of Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, one of the *annales* historians, and in 1975 he produced his miraculous book "Montaillou."

Le Roy Ladurie found that, by studying what people told Fournier about the heresy, he could glean a great deal about their lives as a whole. When a Montallian reports that he lifted the corner of his neighbor's roof and saw two Cathar missionaries dining in her kitchen, one learns something about the construction of houses in Montaillou. When Béatrice de Planissoles, the local chatelaine, reports that one night she and her lover, Pierre Clergue, the town's Catholic (secretly Cathar) priest—also an informer to the Inquisition—fornicated in the church, one discovers something about the extent of Cathar scorn for Catholicism. On and on it goes. It's like a soap opera but better, because it's also a suspense story (we can almost hear the Inquisition coming down the road), and a serious narrative about the human search for meaning. Raymond de l'Aire says that one day he was cutting grass with Pierre Rauzi when Pierre asked him, "Do you believe that God and the Blessed Mary are something—really?" He replied yes, of course. Then Pierre said, "God and the Blessed Virgin Mary are nothing but the visible world around us; nothing but what we see and hear." What God is, how to get to Heaven, what Heaven will be like: they talked about it all the time.

That was normal in the Middle Ages. Such questions are the subject of the Divine Comedy, which Dante was writing even as Raymond and Pierre were cutting the grass. But we never get close to Dante's characters. We wouldn't dare. Francesca da Rimini, Farinata degli Uberti: between us and them stand their high rhetoric and their damnation. With the people of Montaillou, however, we see their faces, hold their hands. Because of Le Roy Ladurie's book—and its source, the Fournier Register—we know more about Montaillou than about any other medieval community.

"Montaillou" was a big hit in France—Mitterrand used to read it during Cabinet meetings—and Barbara Bray's lovely English translation, published in 1978, has sold more than a hundred thousand copies in paperback. (And that's just the Vintage edition.) The book has raised the bar on later histories of Catharism. Stephen O'Shea's "Perfect Heresy" is the report of a good journalist. O'Shea is especially useful on background. He tries to give you the basics: what the Cathars believed, how a catapult works, and so on. He is overly fond of cliffhangers and portents and the pride that goeth before the fall, but such things help to keep one awake during the war conferences. And, if his book is heavy on sex and violence, so was thirteenth-century Languedoc. Historians tell us that the word "Cathar" may come from the Greek word for "pure," or it may be a corruption of a German term for a sexual perversion involving household cats. (Like most fringe groups, the Cathars were accused of elaborate sexual crimes.) But, in my experience, only O'Shea has been willing to say what the perversion was (see page 270).

If O'Shea's book is the Oliver Stone movie of the Cathar conflict, Jonathan Sumption's "The Albigensian Crusade" is the George Eliot novel. Sumption has an English way of assuming that he can understand other people, even if they're medieval or the Pope. Accordingly, his book has a moral heft unshared by any of its competitors. Sumption tells you truths you don't want to know: that Languedoc culture was in decline (we want it to be in noonday flower) when the French came to destroy it; that the Capetian bureaucrats who took over Languedoc after the war (nasty colonial governors, we hope) ran a better government than their southern predecessors; that the corrupt Catholic priests whom the Cathars so despised were not really scoundrels but mostly poor schmoes. In the north, because of primogeniture, smart, ambitious men became priests. They had few other choices. In the south, the Church got every parish's least talented sons, and, in Sumption's words, "most were more demoralized than corrupt." To read this is to have one's judgmentalism short-circuited, and to feel the tears of things.

With his ease in handling contraries, Sumption creates unforgettable characters. The best is his portrait of Innocent III, who tried to eradicate the heresy and to be a just man at the same time. (Innocent had been a lawyer before he became Pope; Sumption is a lawyer, too.) Also marvellous is his study of Simon de Monfort, the foremost French general, oxlike, pious, and fearless—a sort of war machine—who, having been instructed to wipe out the heresy, was then forced to listen endlessly to the Pope's scruples about canon law, feudal law, other law.

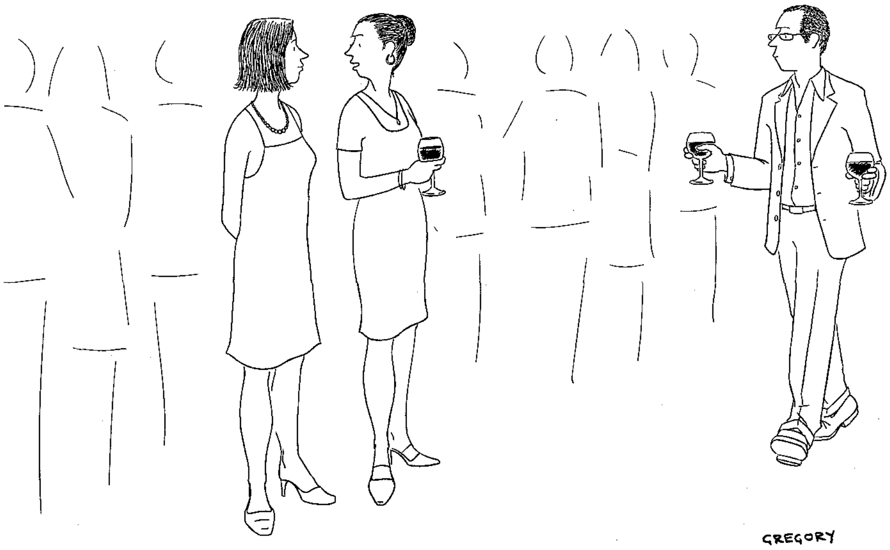
Finally, Knopf has published a strange book, "The Yellow Cross," by René Weis, a professor of English at University College London. Like Le Roy Ladurie, Weis has limited his subject to late Catharism, and largely to Montaillou. Therefore he has a problem: he has to fight his way out of Le Roy Ladurie's long shadow. The way he copes with this is, first, to dispute a number of Le Roy Ladurie's conclusions without identifying them as such, and, second, to accumulate so much detail that no one can ever claim that there wasn't more to be said on the subject of Montaillou. Add to this what seems a mild obsession with Richard Holmes's "footsteps" theory—that the historian should find the very place where so-and-so ate his lunch or forded the river—and you have a book in which the particulars utterly swamp any general conclusions, not to speak of their effect on storytelling. At one point, Weis interrupts a kidnapping conspiracy to tell us that the participants stopped to have dinner, and what they ate, and what pots they cooked it in, and how much it cost, and how that was more than somebody else paid for a comparable meal. By the time he is done, you have forgotten that Guillemette Piquier was being kidnapped. Nor is Weis a gifted translator: "Jeanne scoffed, 'Ha, you old heretical cowherdess, you need a solid squeezing, since you're brimful of heresy!' "

He is also aggressively, anachronistically judgmental. The medieval Church, he tells us, was a "savagely repressive regime." Well, yes. This *is* the medieval Church. Likewise, no historical relativism blunts his indignation when it comes to sexual adventurers. When Pierre Clergue, the priest—having been through Béatrice de Planissoles and half the other women in town—turns his attention to Grazide Rives, aged fourteen or fifteen, and deflowers her in her family's barn, it is because he is a "ruthless" man, a "demonic" Lothario who "indoctrinated" Grazide with his "free-love cant." As Weis is forced to add soon afterward (he doesn't cheat), the afternoon in the barn was the beginning of an affair that lasted several years, with the knowledge of Grazide's mother and, eventually, her husband. (She married when she was sixteen.) Their complaisance was unquestionably due to Clergue's power in Montaillou. But, according to Grazide, she *liked* Clergue, and, as she told Fournier, she did not consider sex to be a sin as long as both parties enjoyed it. So Clergue—or Catharism, or maybe the folkways of fourteenth-century Pyrenean peasants—indoctrinated her pretty well.

If this is how Weis treats heterosexual misbehavior, one can imagine what he thinks of the other kind. The disportings of the local homosexual, Arnaud de Verniolles, with the teen-age boys of the neighborhood are described by Le Roy Ladurie with a Gallic calm: "Sometimes, before proceeding to the main point, the lovers would dress in tunics and wrestle and dance. . . . Arnaud used to give his young men little presents. . . . All this served to fill his leisure time, especially in the holidays." Here, and also in the matter of Clergue and Grazide, Le Roy Ladurie does not disguise the politics involved. The seducer had power; the seduced bowed to power, and was lucky or not in his or her seducer. "He did it gently," Grazide says of Clergue. He "threatened me with a knife," Guillaume Ros says of de Verniolles. (Arnaud says Guillaume consented. The boy had had prior homosexual experience.) Weis records these complications, but they do not affect his verdict. Arnaud, he says, was a "serial sex offender," the author of "heinous" acts.

Such views make for a Cathar history altogether different from Sumption's or Le Roy Ladurie's. "The Yellow Cross" is the story of bad people persecuting good people, and, not incidentally, of René Weis's indignation about that. Sumption's book is a history of the Catholic Church, not good or bad but just very much there, bringing into line people who, again, were not good or bad but decent enough. The book is a tragedy. At times, it seems to owe as much to Shakespeare as to the chronicles of medieval Languedoc.

The same is true of Le Roy Ladurie's "Montaillou," but this book is not a tragedy. It is a dark comedy. Although almost everyone in it loses eventually, and horribly, the emphasis is not on loss but on enjoyment—how the people sat in the sun and deloused each other and gossiped, how they had dinner and then talked about God till cockcrow. Yes, Pierre Clergue was a scoundrel and an informer, but he was also a peerless bedmate—gentle, imaginative, responsible about birth control (he brought you a lavalliere with special herbs)—and shouldn't he get credit for that? Yes, your neighbors would turn against you, but not always, not when they didn't have to. When the bishop's constables came after a shepherd named Pierre Maury, he baked them an enormous pie, and they liked it so much that they thanked him and went away. He was eventually arrested, but not for several more years. The light would shine, and then the night would fall. That was all right, the people felt. God would reach down his hand, and, if they had taken the *consolamentum*, he would scoop them up and take them to Heaven. ♦



"I love what you've done with him."

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DOUBLE DEALING

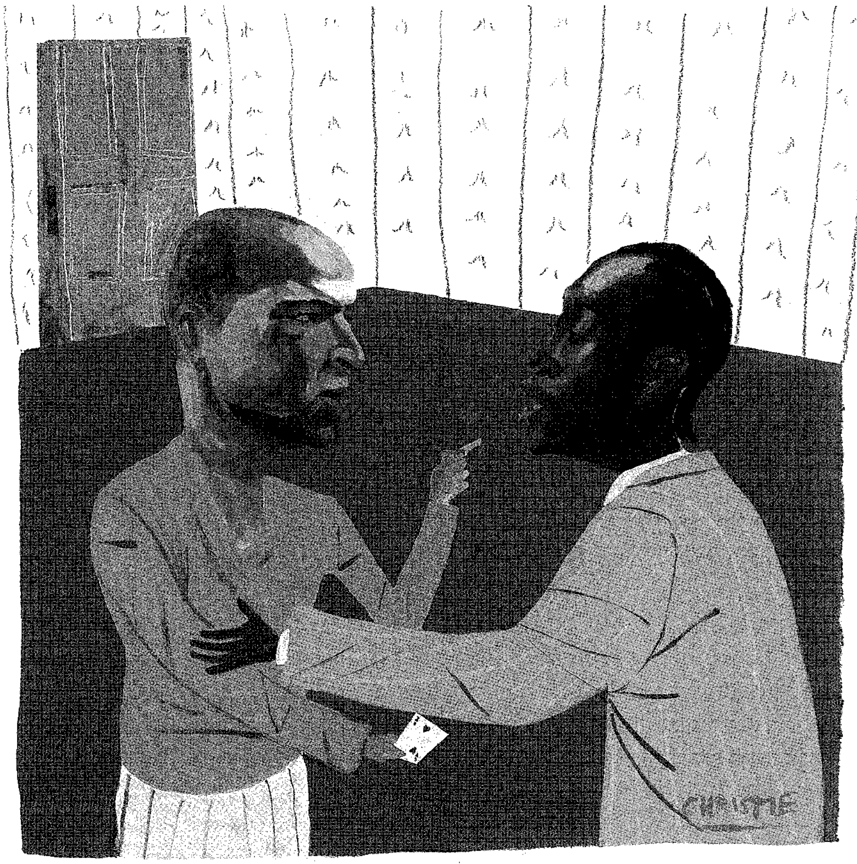
Suzan-Lori Parks's bickering brothers.

BY NANCY FRANKLIN

In her plays, Suzan-Lori Parks has often improvised on history and literature the way a jazz musician improvises on a classic tune—for instance, her 1999 "In the Blood," about a welfare mother named Hester, takes off from "The Scarlet Letter." Parks has called history "time that won't quit," and in keeping with that view she has largely left the setting of her plays undefined. In "The America Play," all we know is that the characters are in "a great hole. In the middle of nowhere. The hole is an exact replica of the Great Hole of History." In "Topdog/Underdog" (now at the Joseph Papp Public Theatre), whose naturalism constitutes a departure for the generally more experimental Parks, the setting is a seedy furnished room with peeling wallpaper, the time is "Now," and the place is "Here."

In this room live two brothers, named—and bear with me while I struggle to avoid saying "prophetically named," and fail—Lincoln and Booth. Lincoln (Jeffrey Wright) is older than Booth (Don Cheadle) by only a few years, but he has a heaviness about him that makes him seem ancient, a quality that is no doubt partly due to his bizarre and uniquely deadening job: every day, he goes to work at an arcade, where, dressed up like Abraham Lincoln, he is shot at (with blanks) by customers who pay to reënact the assassination. (This character echoes one in "The America Play," called the Foundling Father, who is also a Lincoln impersonator.) Lincoln has the weight of his own history on his shoulders as well, but even before we know this we see it: when he walks in on Booth at the beginning of the play, wearing a frock coat, a fake beard, a stovepipe hat, and white face paint, he looks grave and resigned, alive only in the broadest definition of the word. Booth is jumpy—surprised by Lincoln, he pulls a gun on him—and full of "scheming and dreaming." He is practicing three-card monte (Lincoln's former means of support) and talks excitedly about getting his old girlfriend back: "I gave her this ring today. Diamond. Well, Diamond-esque, but it looks just as good as the real thing." (To insure her coöperation in his vision of their romance, he selected a ring a half-size too small, so that she would have a hard time taking it off.) The brothers have been brought together by circumstance—Lincoln needed a place to stay after his wife threw him out, and Booth needs the rent money that Lincoln provides. Their relationship is one of both closeness and competitiveness: they provoke and attempt to one-up each other, and when they need to—when they are remembering how their parents left them as teen-agers, for example—they psychically huddle together for warmth. But the tension between them grows as Booth tries to persuade Lincoln to return to the three-card-monte life; Booth sees it as a way to win over his girlfriend and move up in the world, but Lincoln, who is ashamed of the hustles he used to pull off, and saw his partner get killed over the cards, knows that it's truly a dead end.

Parks is known for her literary playfulness and her humor, which can take the form of her referring, in an essay, to a writer's body of work as " 'BOW,' as in 'Bow Wow Wow!'," or substituting the words "faux-father" and "foe-father" for "forefather" in "The America Play." In "Topdog/Underdog," she has plowed those qualities directly into the characters. Booth at one point sprays air freshener to clear the room of Lincoln's musings on the past—"You done jinxed up thuh joint with yr raggedy recollections." And there's a very funny moment when the two of them, exulting in the cash and the new bottle of whiskey that come with Lincoln's payday, pretend to be stock characters from another era's entertainments: Booth cries out, "Oh Lordamighty Ima faint, Pa! Get me muh med-sin!," to which Lincoln responds, "Don't die on me, Ma!" I



Jeffrey Wright and Don Cheadle in "Topdog/Underdog."

R. GREGORY CHRISTIE

don't always see the point of Parks's deliberate misspellings ("yr" for "your" or "you're") and punctuation lapses (she eschews apostrophes). She has written that in her plays "each word is configured to give the actor a clue to their physical life. Look at the difference between 'the' and 'thuh.' The 'uh' requires the actor to employ a different physical, emotional, vocal attack." I don't buy it. Still, that same unconventional mindset enables Parks to change the way the audience sees things. In one scene, Lincoln unnerves his brother when he shows him how he falls on the floor and dies during his act: it's too realistic. Lincoln also is disturbed—he doesn't want to scare the customers too much, because then he might lose his job. He says, "People are funny about they Lincoln shit. Its historical. People like they historical shit in a certain way. They like it to unfold the way they folded it up. Neatly like a book."

There is nothing to be faulted in the acting in "Topdog/Underdog"; Cheadle and Wright, under the direction of George C. Wolfe, the Public's producer, bring out all the permutations of brotherliness in the play. They are wonderful to watch. But Wolfe should have taken a stronger hand to the script itself. Written in three days, according to Parks, "Topdog/Underdog" keeps letting the air out of its own tires. The clunky, overwritten exposition stalls the play, again and again, particularly when Lincoln and Booth are discussing their childhood. At one point, Booth, talking to his brother, refers to "your wife, Cookie"—as if Lincoln didn't know what his wife's name was. And Lincoln, shortly after talking about the unfolding and folding up of history, tells Booth things about himself that his brother already well knows: "I swore off them cards. Took nowhere jobs. Drank. Then Cookie threw me out." It's surprising that Wolfe didn't encourage Parks to take a pencil to these irritating violations of the theatrical rule "Show, don't tell." (The folks at Disney, for whom Parks is writing a musical about the Harlem Globetrotters, are not likely to be so indulgent, and Parks's work will probably be the better for it.) Because of these too numerous passages, the play, which in parts does have the energy and fascination of a hustle, has the deck stacked against it. ♦

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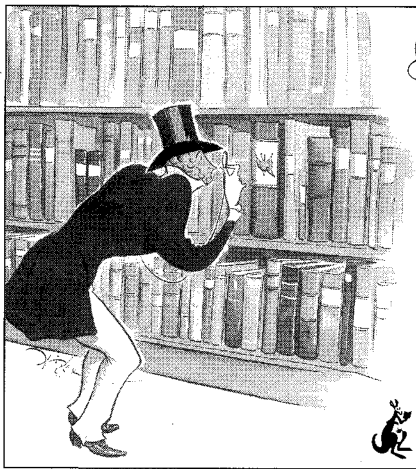

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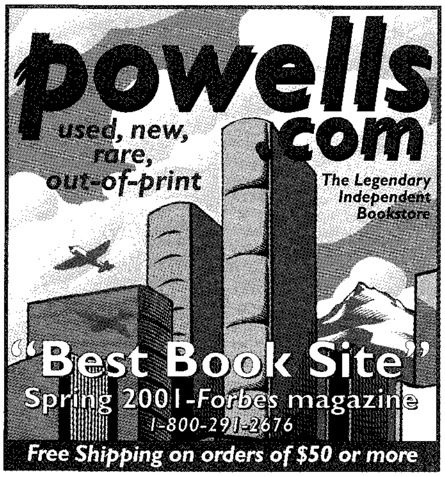

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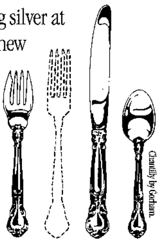

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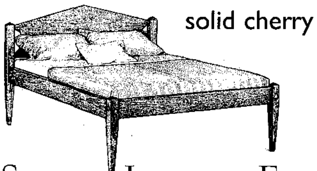

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THE CURRENT CINEMA

MISANTHROPES

Apes and teens.

BY DAVID DENBY

In the new "Planet of the Apes," the English actor Tim Roth is one hell of an ape. Roth plays Thade, the military leader, a Fascist in simian samurai armor who wants to exterminate the brutes—the human beings. Thade is so wound up from ambition and rage that his beard has turned white and his eyes seem to be rolling back into his skull. A chimp, he's on the small side, compared with the gorillas, so he's forced to approach the other apes from underneath, like Groucho stalking a blonde. Yet he can go airborne when he needs to: he rouses his troops by shrieking and hopping around from tree to rock. He's one of those neurotically intense apes who never give themselves a moment's rest, and he's by far the most interesting thing in "Planet of the Apes." In fact, he's just about the only interesting thing in "Planet of the Apes." Tim Burton's enormous production is spectacular but empty, and I can think of no better measure of the ebbing intelligence of American movies than a comparison between this film and the original "Planet," from 1968. Directed by Franklin Schaffner, the old movie was clunky in some ways: the apes talked too much and moved like humans—they looked, indeed, like actors with hoods on—and they all had the same nose (a big button). The interior sets were schlocky, in the style of a stucco fun house. Yet Schaffner did wonders with the widescreen compositions. The action scenes, staged in open, non-digitized space, were second only to Peckinpah's. And the script was surprisingly clever. Rod Serling and Michael Wilson wrote parodies of the evolution debate, staging their own version of the Scopes trial, with humans as the possible missing link in ape development. Prosy and schoolroomish at times, the movie was also violent, scary, and funny, and, for all its gimmicks, it had a strong emotional pull. The famous ending, a genuine shocker, haunted moviegoers for years.

Tim Burton, of course, is a much more dynamic and explosive filmmaker than Schaffner. The new movie has Burton's patented black-on-black look, and the great cinematographer Philippe Rousselot puts a gleam into the ebony images. Shambling from side to side, roaring and leaping, the apes look great—these actors are much better than the ones in the 1968 film at aping ape behavior. The screenwriters, William Broyles, Jr., and the team of Lawrence Konner and Mark Rosenthal, make a pass at satire—there is, for example, a fancy dinner party at which a powerful old ape turns up with his trophy wife. In the scenes of combat, Burton makes things jump, but, still, watching his recent movies, including "Mars Attacks!" and "Sleepy Hollow," I've begun to think that he is off on his own planet somewhere, communicating with the spheres, maybe, but not with the audience. Burton is trying to develop his movies entirely out of visual atmosphere, and in each film he seems obsessed with one stunning image or set of images. In "Sleepy Hollow," it was that headless horseman riding through the dark woods, and here it's the apes roaring and then thumping someone with their fists. At the same time, the relationships among the humans, and between the humans and the apes, are so negligently conceived that almost nothing comes through. The star, Mark Wahlberg, playing the astronaut Leo Davidson, moves well, but Wahlberg belongs in a specific neighborhood, like the Bronx or South Boston—he

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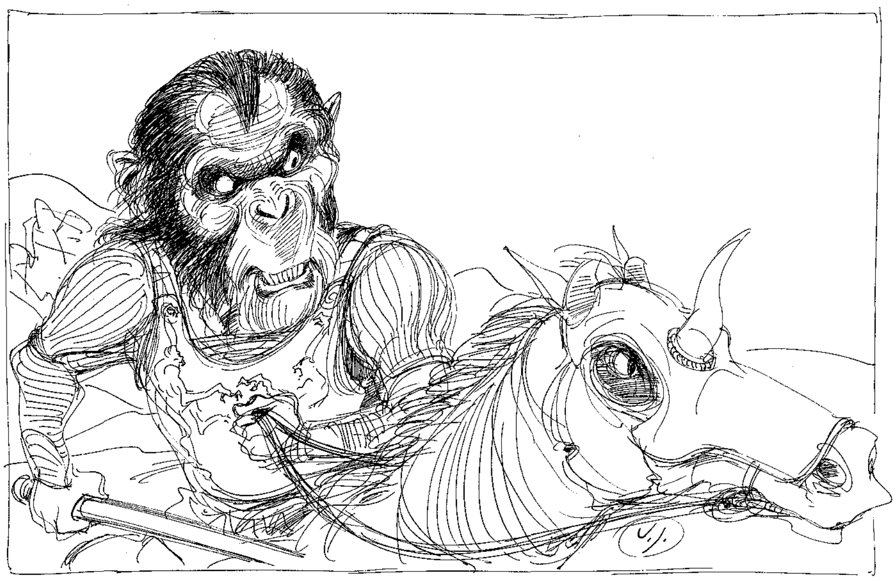
doesn't have enough going on in his face to carry a movie alone, and the women at the screening, bored, began hoping he would be reduced to a loincloth, as Charlton Heston was thirty-three years ago. As a rich liberal ape who concerns herself with what you would have to call human rights, Helena Bonham Carter is sweetly demure and almost inaudible.

The movie slips out of your grasp as you're watching it: Burton and his screenwriters never capture the grand sense of myth that made the earlier film exciting, and even routine plot details are impossibly vague. This new "Planet of the Apes" is a typical high-tech project, put together with extraordinary production skills and pathetic dramatic skills. Eager for authenticity, the filmmakers sent much of the cast to "ape school," but they forgot to teach themselves how to create a narrative structure that anyone could give a damn about.



Tim Roth plays one of those neurotic apes who never give themselves a moment's rest.

VICTOR JUHASZ

In "Ghost World," an eighteen-year-old sourpuss, Enid (Thora Birch), and her sarcastic friend Rebecca (Scarlett Johansson) escape from high school with no particular goal in mind except to gaze on the fallen world around them. The two girls have an irritable on-and-off friendship, and the actresses are extremely funny together. Thora Birch, who was Kevin Spacey's unhappy daughter in "American Beauty," is paler than one of Dracula's victims; she has short black hair and large glasses with square black frames, and she holds herself very still, freezing her round face into a malignant stare of disbelief whenever she hears anything she doesn't like (i.e., whenever she hears anything at all). Scarlett Johansson's comic weapon is simpler—a devastating monotone that signifies the hope, perhaps, that all living organisms within thirty yards shall cease to exist. No man or woman who is friendly or enthusiastic, no one who's trying to do anything—or be anything—eludes the knowing eyes of these strip-mall Savonarolas. Outraged by small errors of taste and tone, they may have no values to speak of, apart from pop-culture connoisseurship, but they are never at a loss for disgust. As the girls see it, the human race is a disaster, save for a couple of people they choose to favor: Josh (Brad Renfro), a wordless, masturbatory youth who works in a convenience store; and Seymour (Steve Buscemi), a nominal adult who collects ancient blues records, an activity that vaguely appeals to Enid as a rebellion against the heaping cultural rubbish in the malls. Seymour is a self-hating loser, yet he has integrity of a sort, and Enid finds solace in him.

"Ghost World" is based on Daniel Clowes's celebrated cartoon novel of the same title, which Clowes adapted with the film's director, Terry Zwigoff ("Crumb"). The two men developed relationships and added characters to the material without violating its acid yet tender moods. For a while, as "Ghost World" establishes the girls' surly world view, it's a very satisfying new kind of dyspeptic comedy, a live-action cartoon made with double-edged irony: the girls' attitudes are infantile, but they are right about a lot of the creeps around them. Zwigoff and Clowes have produced a poetically depressed American urban landscape that is virtually without motion. As people drift down dreary streets or vegetate at home, "Ghost World" exaggerates reality not by adding but by subtracting elements of life; the bitter, profane remarks stand out against the dead air like a solo violin playing out of tune. Yet the discordant tone isn't ugly. The panels of Clowes's line drawings are tinted a pale blue-green, but Zwigoff makes the commercial streets and stores as beautiful as possible, and shoots the lonely figures with a good bit of air around them. He was right, I think, to make the images visually elegant—the handsomeness gives an edge of clarity and some snap to material that might have fallen into crabby nowheresville. The hostile wit of "Ghost World" is almost chic.

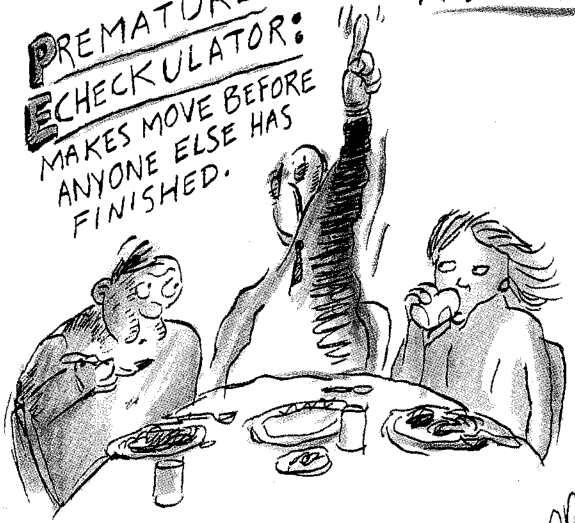
But Zwigoff and Clowes still haven't quite solved the problem of how to make a great film from a graphic novel. After setting up the terrain, the filmmakers zero in on Enid's unhappiness. We see her as defensive and lost, a girl as incoherent in her emotions as any other teen-ager. She mucks around in Seymour's life, breaking up a love affair he's having, out of the sheer need to assert herself. In other words, "Ghost World" becomes a different, more conventional movie—a movie about a girl who makes jokes to cover her pain and who needs to grow up. But, if the film has entered a psychologically accountable world, then there's no longer any reason—any excuse—for a dimension of life to be missing from it. The scenes of Enid's unhappiness seem underwritten, merely eccentric and dry, and paced far too slowly. The comic spirit drains out of the movie; the flatness now seems a kind of impoverishment. "Ghost World" assumes an almost parental concern for Enid's state. It allows her to fall to the bottom, then it saves her. The movie even suggests that she has a destiny, and this is an unwelcome surprise, since most of us would wish no other future for Enid the brilliant comic-book invention but to be herself, a hilariously morose teen-ager, forever and ever. ♦

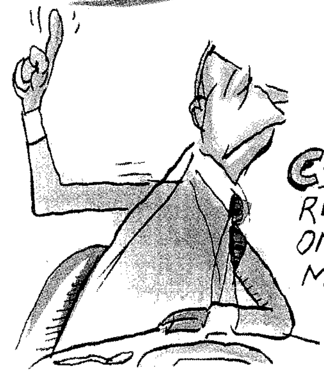
THE BACK PAGE BY STAN MACK

SIGNALLING FOR THE CHECK

A GLOSSARY OF TYPES

PREMATURE ECHECKULATOR: MAKES MOVE BEFORE ANYONE ELSE HAS FINISHED.





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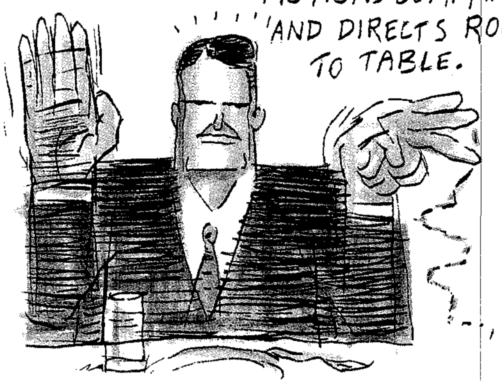

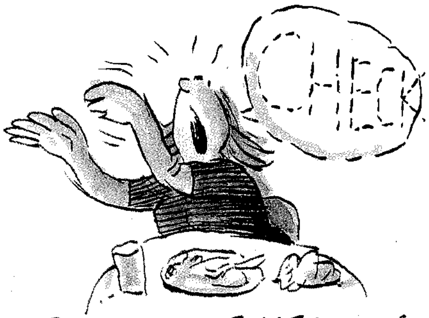

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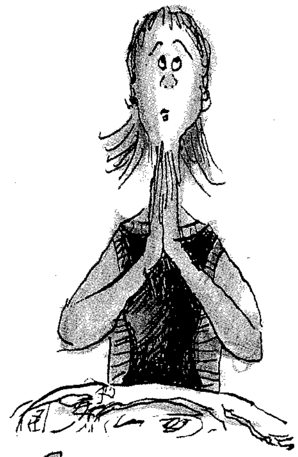

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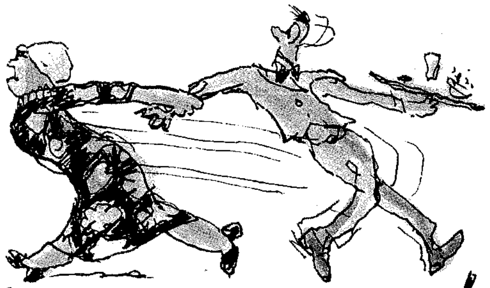

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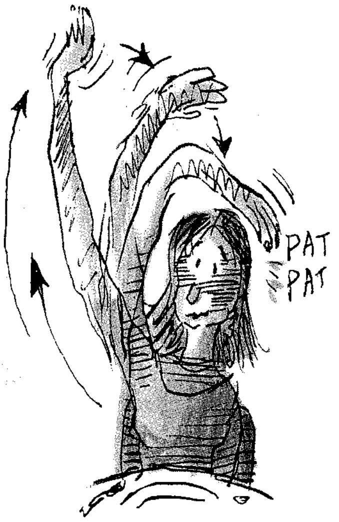

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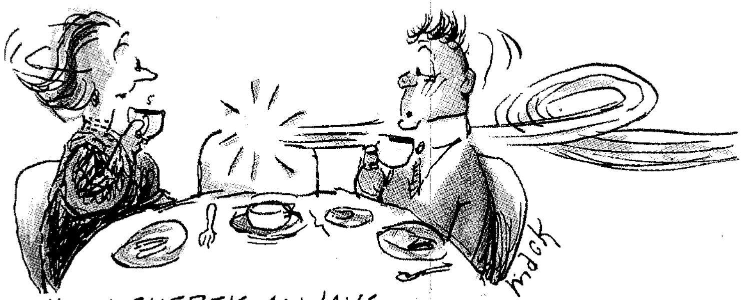

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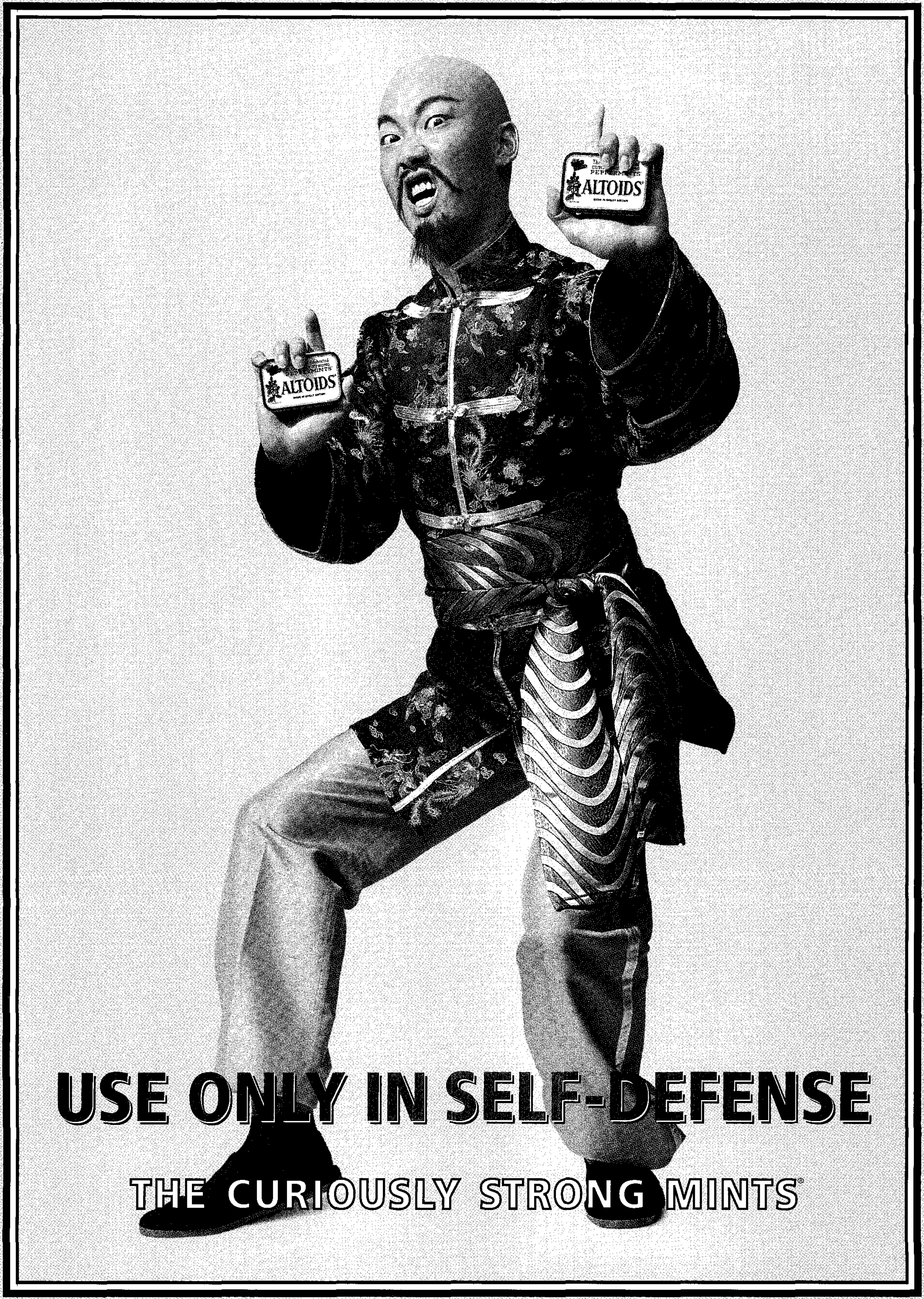

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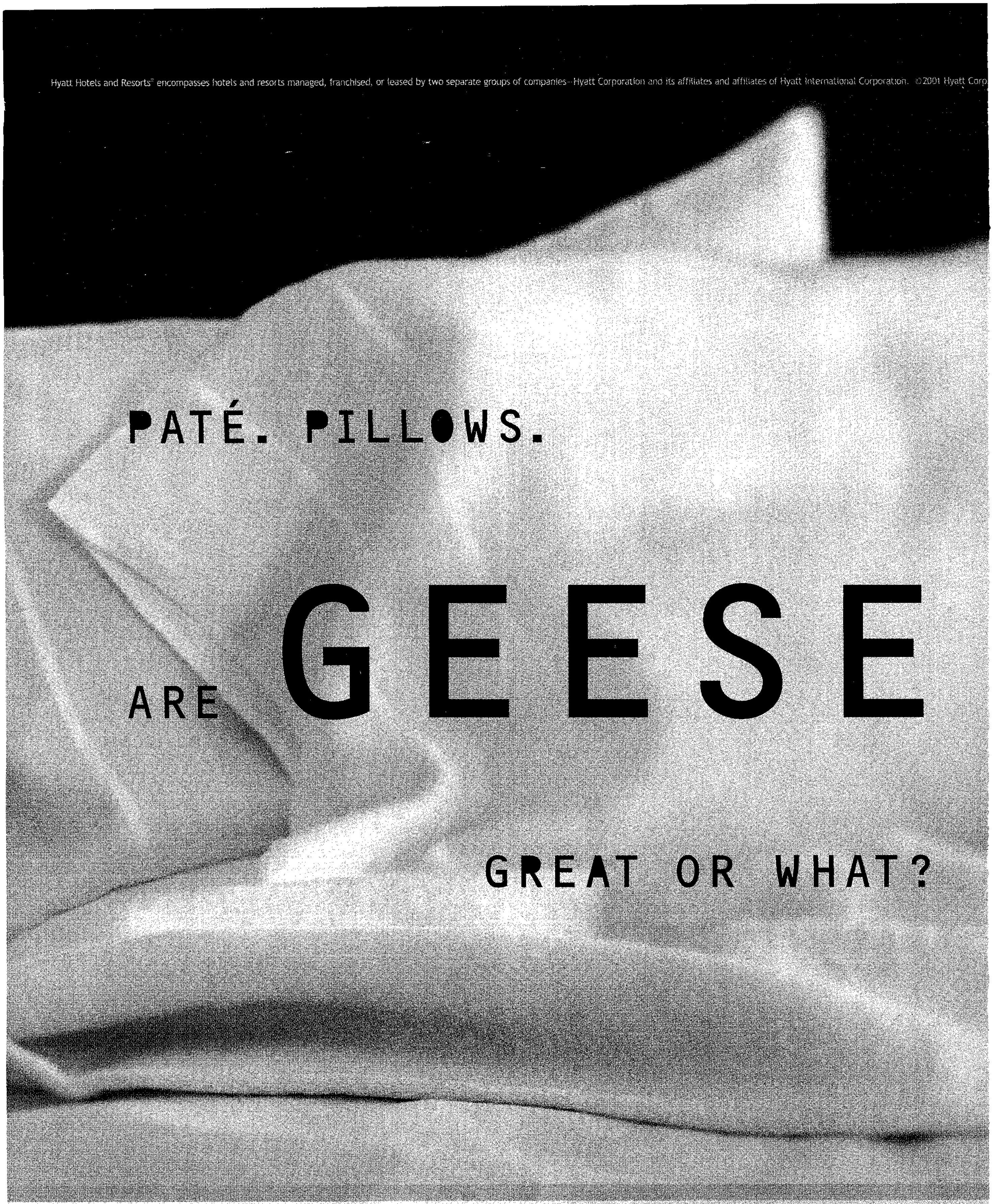

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